Chronicles

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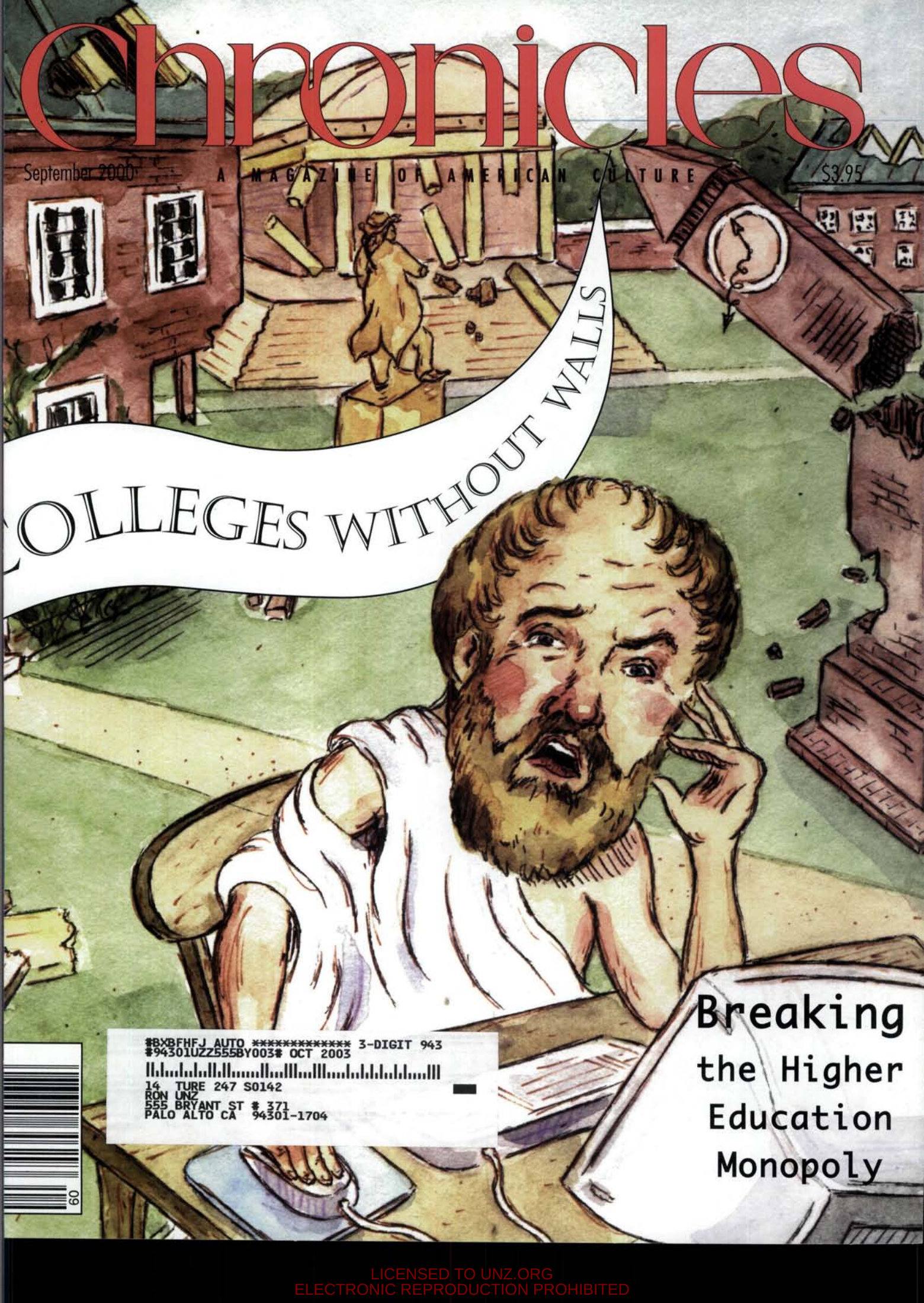

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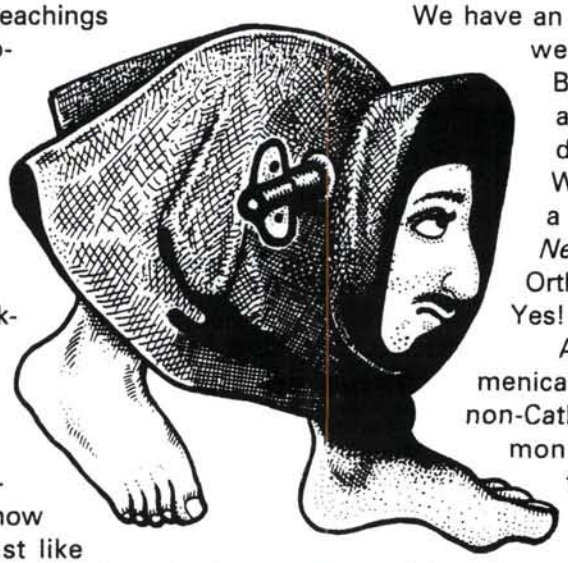
Why Are Catholics Such Cowards?

The Vatican thunders against abortion, priestesses, same-sex "marriage," assisted suicide, illicit sex, consumerism, smutty sex education, defective theology, and more. But walk into your average parish. *Where's the beef?*

All we get are *crumbs*: balloons or clowns or liturgical dancers or banners with greeting-card sentiments, but always platitudinous homilies. We don't hear about the Church's teachings on abortion, euthanasia, homosexuality, pre-marital sex, pornography, birth control, the indissolubility of marriage, Hell, etc. *Why not?* "Too controversial," whines the cowardly pastor. Pop psychology and feel-good "theology" are all the go. Shack-ups and homosexual partnerships are considered morally equivalent to Holy Matrimony, for Father Fluff doesn't refer to husbands and wives as husbands and wives anymore — now he calls them "partners," just like people in immoral unions, lest those living in sin feel "marginalized" or, well, sinful. Indeed, sin and repentance are passé, prompting one to wonder why Christ bothered to get crucified and why the martyrs chose death over compromising the Faith.



Wimpy clerics, deathly afraid of being Politically Incorrect, keep the full Catholic message from us. We're being robbed of our history, doctrine, moral resources, and intellectual heritage. No wonder many Catholics, who don't have a clue as to what Catholicism stands for, fall for anything our decadent culture entices them with!

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Chronicles

A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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On *The Culture of Critique*

I thank Paul Gottfried for a generally accurate and positive review of my book, *The Culture of Critique* ("A Race Apart," *Opinions*, June). Nevertheless, there are a few issues that bear discussion, the most important of which is the role of Jewish organizations and intellectuals with strong Jewish identifications as agents of change in the cultural transformations that have occurred in Western societies over the past 50 years. In general, Jewish intellectual and political movements were a *necessary* condition for these changes, not a *sufficient* condition, as Gottfried suggests. In the case of U.S. immigration policy, there simply were no other pressure groups pushing for liberalized immigration during the period under consideration (up to 1965). Moreover, I do not assume that these movements are part of a monolithic Jewish "conspiracy"; my argument is that these movements were dominated by individuals who identified themselves as Jews and who viewed their intellectual and political activities as advancing specific Jewish interests, especially the eradication of antisemitism.

Gottfried attributes the sea change in immigration to "a general cultural change that beset Western societies and was pushed by the managerial state." I agree that multiethnic immigration resulted from a general cultural shift, but we still must develop theories for the origin of this shift, and Jewish intellectual and political movements were a necessary condition. Fundamental to this transformation was the decline of ethnic consciousness among European peoples. It is fascinating to contrast the immigration debates of the 1920's with those of the 50's and 60's. The restrictionists of the 20's unabashedly asserted the right of European-derived peoples, who colonized and created the political and economic culture of the country, to maintain it as their possession.

By the 1950's (and certainly by the 60's), it was impossible to make such assertions without being deemed not only a racist but an intellectual Neanderthal. Such assertions conflicted with the Boasian wisdom that genetic differences between peoples were trivial and irrelevant; they conflicted with the Marxist beliefs that all peoples were equal and that nationalism and assertions of ethnic interests were reactionary; they were deemed a sure sign of psychopathology within the frameworks of psychoanalysis and the Frankfurt School; and they would have been regarded as the babblings of country bumpkins by the New York intellectuals who spouted variants of all these ideologies from prestigious academic and media institutions. There may, indeed, have been other forces that relegated such a mindset to the political and intellectual fringe—Gottfried mentions liberal Protestantism and the managerial state—but it is difficult to understand the effectiveness of either of these influences in the absence of the Jewish movements I describe. The rise of a de-ethnicized gentile managerial elite—exemplified by Bill Clinton—that rejects traditional cultural institutions and is interwoven with a critical mass of ethnically conscious Jews is an important fact of our current political life. The rise of such an elite is hardly an inevitable consequence of modernization or any other force I am aware of. Such de-ethnicized managerial elites are unique to European and European-derived societies; they are not found elsewhere in the world, including highly developed nations such as Japan and Israel and the undeveloped nations of Africa.

There is little doubt that there is something about European cultures that makes them susceptible to the movements I discuss. I think there is real value in Gottfried's suggestion that Protestant culture—particularly its emphasis on social guilt—provides a uniquely fertile ground for the movements I discuss. But it is noteworthy that the cultural shifts under consideration have also occurred in traditionally Catholic countries, such as France and Italy, where Protestantism has not been a factor.

There are a few other minor issues I might quarrel with. Gottfried claims that intermarriage occurred frequently in pre-Rabbinic Judaism and that my views on Jewish rejection of exogamy are inappropriate generalizations from restrictions on the Kohanim (i.e., the priestly caste). It is true that Solomon and other Israelite kings had children by foreign concubines. However, the offspring of these relationships had a separate status within Is-

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raelite society, below the pure Israelite stock, even into Rabbinic times—a phenomenon that attests to the importance of bloodlines throughout Jewish history. While the marriage practices of the Kohanim are indeed stricter than those of other Jews, there is no question that marriage into the Jewish gene pool was very infrequent until quite recently, and modern population genetic studies show very little genetic admixture between Jews and surrounding populations. These data are described in my book *A People That Shall Dwell Alone: Judaism as a Group Evolutionary Strategy* (1994).

Current rates of intermarriage may be a highly questionable indicator of the long-term prospects of Jewish continuity as an endogamous ethnic group. First, Judaism may well end up retaining its ethnic coherence even in the face of high levels of intermarriage if, as appears to be the case, a high percentage of the children and grandchildren of intermarriage eventually leave Judaism either because they become completely assimilated or because they feel unwelcome in the Jewish community. Secondly, despite the current high rates of intermarriage, there is clearly a core of highly committed individuals in all the major sects of Judaism for whom genetic or cultural assimilation is anathema. Intense commitment to ethnocentrism and endogamy continues to be characteristic of the increasingly numerous, prolific, and influential Jewish Orthodox and fundamentalist movements, and conversion and intermarriage remain controversial even within the most liberal sectors of the Jewish community.

Finally, Gottfried rejects my theory that the high levels of IQ found among Ashkenazi Jews and some historical Sephardic populations indicate a higher genetic potential of intelligence among these Jewish groups. While it is true that some Jewish populations have undistinguished IQs, it seems very likely that, whatever cultural pushes there have been for IQ within Jewish groups, there is also a strong genetic component. Current research suggests a maximum variation of ten IQ points through environmental manipulations such as adoption. Gottfried is correct in noting that different groups have waxed and waned in importance throughout history, but Jewish groups have repeatedly assumed a very high degree of social and economic importance, from the late Roman Empire to 15th-century Spain and 19th- and 20th-century Europe.

—Kevin MacDonald
Long Beach, CA

Dr. Gottfried Replies:

My differences with Kevin MacDonald are ones of emphasis more than of substance. Like him, I recognize the existence of a double standard in the way American and other Jews stress ethnic solidarity for themselves but the moral necessity of multiculturalism for white Christians. This double standard offers the hermeneutic key to the comments of *Slate* editor Judy Shulevitz (May 2). In response to a complaint that American Jews denounced Bob Jones University for discouraging interracial dating but stubbornly practice tribalism in their own group, Shulevitz contrasted white Christian "racism" to the "ethnic chauvinism" characteristic of blacks and Jews. Because of their "historical burdens," the distaste for outsiders felt by Jews and blacks is excusable and not to be compared to the "reprehensible" objection of a white Southerner contemplating his child's marriage to a black. (Shulevitz's critic happens to be Jewish.) American Christians with mainstream journalistic respectability do not choose to raise embarrassing questions about Jewish claims to ethnic exceptionalism, despite the fact that Jews have risen far in the United States, encountering on the whole less discrimination than most ethnic Catholics.

Where I do disagree with MacDonald is on the importance assigned to Jewish efforts to "de-ethnicize" Western Christian societies. Although both the Frankfurt School and Boasian anthropologists have pushed for an engineered and misnamed "open" society, as have the Anti-Defamation League and the American Jewish Congress, such groups do not provide a sufficient or even "necessary" cause for the changes in question. Between the 1920's, when immigration into the United States was restricted, and the watershed immigration act of 1965, there were political and cultural developments that strongly shaped the present attitudes toward diversity as a civil religion. The two most critical of these developments were the consolidation of a managerial state committed to broad social reconstruction and, ultimately, the eradication of national loyalties, and the collapse of WASPdom into its present culture of self-mortification. MacDonald rightly notes that Jewish intellectuals and organizations worked to advance both trends, but that point does not provide a comprehensive explanation of what happened. Vast social engineering occurred in Scandinavia *before* it reached the United States and unfolded there largely in the *absence* of Jews. Moreover, as amply demonstrated by Ray Honeyford, Claus Nordbruch, and René Girard, Christian clergy in Europe have tirelessly endorsed the multicultural agenda long identified here with Jews and liberal Protestants. Indeed, the radicalizing function attributed to Jews has been effectively incarnated by different minorities in different places at different times: Huguenots in France, Old Believers in Russia, and Irish Catholics and non-Anglican Protestants in England have all stirred the pot of social discontent because of their sense of marginalization. Today in Canada, ethnic Catholics support the left as enthusiastically and one-sidedly as do the descendants of Eastern European Jews.

MacDonald's insistence that Ashkenazic Jews are naturally more intelligent than other European-Americans gives me pause. If true, that might justify (certainly from the standpoint of racial nationalists who seem to accept this cognitive disparity) the social subordination of white gentiles to a Jewish master race. In this view, Jewish domination of relatively dull-witted *goyim* should be hailed as an intellectual step forward, particularly if white gentiles, as measured by IQ tests, are somewhere midway between Jews and American blacks. What is hard to figure out is why racialists assume they have a right to control less intelligent races but that whites should not be subject to cognitively superior Jews. For all I know, MacDonald may be right about the genetic advantages of my ethnic kin in relation to his, but there is another explanation for the observed disparities in achievements. Jews, like Asians, try harder than most WASPs to succeed on standardized tests, as well as in professions. The striking feature is not how well others do, but how totally WASPdom has collapsed. In *One Nation Under God* (1993), authors Barry A. Kosmin and S.P. Lachman demonstrate that even the highest WASP group achievers, Episcopalians and Presbyterians, now lag behind white Catholics as well as Jews in educational advancement and family income. Until convinced by further evi-

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dence, I assume that the reason for this lag is cultural. Protestants who wallow in social guilt and have lost the Puritan virtues are headed for self-destruction. But they have certainly not been cognitively shortchanged. Nor have the other scions of a rich European civilization, which has been indispensable for the intellectual and artistic enrichment of Jews and other groups.

A final point: To my knowledge, there was no social stigma attached to ancient Jewish royalty born of intermarriage, although MacDonald may have other sources of information.

CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS

THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION campaign was well under way when the two major party candidates began crisscrossing the United States, stumping for votes at the annual meetings of Mexican-American organizations. Here in Rockford (as in other cities with significant Hispanic populations), the local Gannett paper devoted an entire Sunday commentary section to interviews with the candidates, stressing the close ties between the United States and Mexico. Not surprisingly, the main opposition candidate charged the handpicked successor to the current president with corruption, while the heir apparent both trumpeted the successes of the ruling party and tried to distance himself from its scandals. The two strongest third-party candidates argued that there wasn't a dime's worth of difference between the two major parties. And when election day came, thousands of Mexican-Americans flocked to the polls to help determine who would be the next president—of Mexico.

Three years ago, when the Mexican government decided to allow Mexicans who had become American citizens to retain Mexican citizenship (and thus vote in both American and Mexican elections), there was a minor outcry in the United States. How could we expect Mexican-Americans to assimilate if the Mexican government told them that they didn't have to? But now, in the midst of our own presidential election, both Democrats and Republicans remain silent on the issue, afraid of alienating a growing voting block.

Or perhaps they don't even care. Both Al Gore and George W. Bush have praised the new Mexican president, Vincente Fox, a former Coca-Cola executive who wants to "modernize" Mexico, completing the work begun by NAFTA. Within two weeks of winning the election, Fox was talking about abolishing the border between Mexico and the United States, allowing the free flow of *all* workers between the two countries. Bush, in particular, may find Fox's program appealing. After all, he has long attacked the Clinton administration for refusing to implement a provision of NAFTA that would let Mexican trucks cross the border without an inspection—a sure way to increase the flow of illegal immigrants and drugs into the United States. Combine a Bush administration in the *Estados Unidos* with a Fox administration in Mexico, and our southern border may become even more porous than our border with Canada.

The issue of dual citizenship, though, is more important than any provision of NAFTA, because it strikes at the very heart of American sovereignty. Assimilation is an organic process which takes considerably longer than we like to think, and governmental efforts to hasten assimilation by convincing new citizens to renounce their cultural inheritance are often destructive. But there is a difference between retaining your culture and remaining loyal to another state, and immigrants of an earlier era understood that distinction. The intent behind Mexico's granting of dual citizenship to Mexican-Americans is nothing less than the creation of a fifth column inside the United States.

I have yet to see a reliable estimate of how many American citizens voted in the Mexican presidential elections, but judging by the video footage of the polls that the Mexican government set up just across the border, the number is significant. Those who care about American sovereignty should demand that our presidential candidates confront this issue, and they should vote only for those who are willing to support legislation that would strip citizenship from any American who chooses to vote in another country's election. Any candidate who would refuse to sign such legislation implicitly supports the ongoing destruction of American sovereignty and citizenship.

—*Scott P. Richert*

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON's bid for the U.S. Senate has captured the attention of the national media. Many pundits are calling the campaign between the First Lady and Long Island Republican Congressman Rick Lazio "the most closely watched U.S. Senate race in history." For once, the national press corps may be onto something—but for the wrong reasons.

Democrats are convinced that the election of Hillary Clinton will extend the reign of Clintonism well into the 21st century. They hope that this feminist icon will promote causes dear to the left—children's "rights," national health care, abortion, environmentalism, and the homosexual agenda—and then, more importantly, use her Senate seat as a launching pad to an even grander objective: becoming the first female president in American history.

For many conservatives, this is an unfolding nightmare. After enduring President Clinton for nearly eight years, the prospect of Sen. Hillary Clinton (or even worse, President Hillary Clinton) is more than many of them can bear. Understandably, they are championing Rick Lazio with the slogan, "anyone but Hillary."

Yet nothing is more emblematic of the moral degeneration of the Clinton years than the media's obsession with the Clinton-Lazio campaign. Mrs. Clinton is not being followed by swarms of journalists because she is an impressive politician with a distinguished record; on the contrary, she has never held elective office and has no legislative accomplishments—a fact which alone should disqualify her from holding a Senate seat. The Clintons have played out their soap-opera drama in front of the entire nation, and now the aggrieved wife wants to become a celebrity in her own right.

Even as leftist Democrats go, the First Lady, who has played a major role in many of the scandals and disasters of the Clinton administration, is an inadequate

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candidate. Everyone knows the list—Travelgate, national health care, campaign finance scandals, the bombing of Yugoslavia.

But despite her chic radicalism, Mrs. Clinton is not the political operator that her husband is. She is cold, rigid, and self-righteous. The notion that she could become a serious force in American politics is an illusion of both the left *and* the right.

For all of Mrs. Clinton's flaws, however, Rick Lazio is no better. The GOP hopeful is a Clintonite politician who throughout his career has pandered to his constituents. And on most issues—abortion, the minimum wage, the environment, government spending, and gun control—he is as far to the left as Mrs. Clinton.

The Clinton-Lazio race is nonetheless important because it embodies the "Clintonization" of American politics: a polarizing partisanship in which both national parties have abandoned their principles, hoping to achieve victory by focusing on personalities and expediency.

—Jeffrey Thomas Kuhner

THE PATRIOT, Mel Gibson's epic about the American Revolution, opened (by an amazing coincidence) in theaters on Independence Day weekend. And cynics complain that Americans don't take national holidays seriously anymore! Many viewers may regard the film as one more wallow in fantasy and stale popcorn, but among the nation's literati, it has actually incited something resembling thought.

Yet the resemblance is not too close. The immediate reaction to *The Patriot* was denunciation for a scene in which the hero's pre-teen sons are given flintlock rifles by their dad (Gibson) and conscripted to help massacre a contingent of British troops about to hang their brother.

Children aren't supposed to have guns, you see; and you are not supposed to have guns either. Even if you do have guns, you're not supposed to give them to kids. And even if you give them to kids, you're supposed to tell them not to shoot anything, especially people, even if they're government troops about to hang your son. What you're supposed to do in situations like this is dial 911 and wait for the cops. The film manages to violate every one of these rules in the space of about ten minutes.

This line of criticism came a cropper when Mr. Gibson and the film's producers refused to change anything in the script, but it should have told them what was in store for their movie. Is it too much to ask late-20th-century critics to grasp that people who lived 200 years ago did not necessarily harbor quite the same superstitions that we do? Maybe back then, they believed in witchcraft and were against premarital sex and all that sort of stuff, but even they didn't believe in gun control.

Undoubtedly the dumbest thing said about the film (maybe the dumbest thing ever said about anything) comes from Jonathan Foreman, reviewing *The Patriot* for *Salon.com*. Mr. Foreman found it objectionable because "'The Patriot' presents a deeply sentimental cult of the family, casts unusually Aryan-looking heroes and avoids any democratic or political context in its portrayal of the Revolutionary War."

Not only is the cast entirely too Aryan for Mr. Foreman, but the scene with the pre-teen sharpshooters is "the equivalent of the Werwolf boy-soldiers that the Third Reich was thought to have recruited from the Hitler Youth to carry out guerrilla attacks against the invading Allies." Well, now, it ought to be clear what Gibson and his "German director Roland Emmerich" are up to. "It's hard not to wonder if the filmmakers have some kind of subconscious agenda," Mr. Foreman mutters. *The Patriot* won't win any Academy Awards, but Mr. Foreman and his own agenda ought to get a Pulitzer for paranoia.

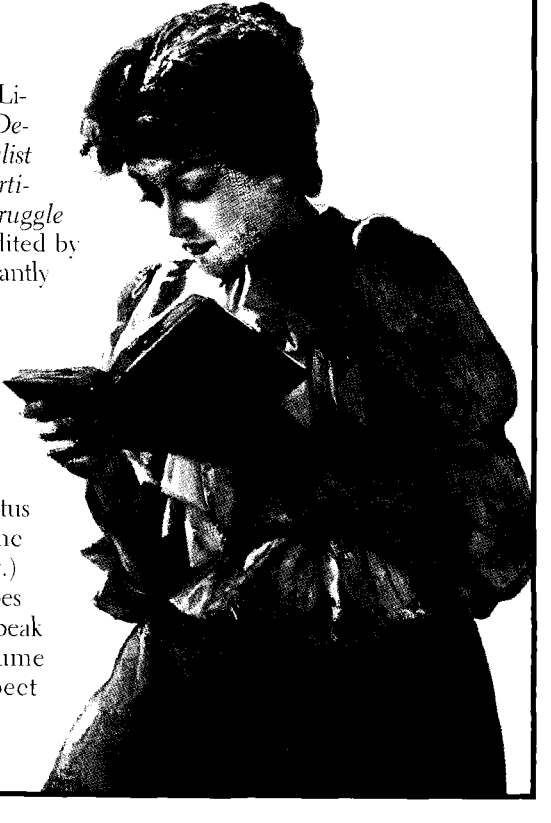
You are probably catching the drift of the objections leveled at the movie. Not only is it politically incorrect on gun control but also on race (by leaving out all the glorious ethnic diversity of 18th-century South Carolina) and other matters as well. There's no sex in the movie and no slavery. Gibson, a prosperous farmer, employs free black laborers.

Actually, even though it's an obvious evasion of the slavery issue, this is not inaccurate. According to Eugene Genovese, the leading historian of American slavery, there were numerous free black farm laborers in colonial America. Their number began to dwindle after the Revolution.

But if there aren't any slaves, there isn't any feminism, either. The female characters are strong women, but they do not behave like men. They don't shoot people or fight in battles or save the male characters, but they do protect homes and children, facing mortal dangers bravely. Religion—meaning Christianity—is also positively portrayed, with characters gathering in churches and a cler-

BOOK OF NEXT MONTH

Our book for next month is the Library of America volume *The Debate on the Constitution: Federalist and Antifederalist Speeches, Articles, and Letters During the Struggle Over Ratification, Part One*, edited by Bernard Bailyn. This is a brilliantly arranged volume that puts you back into the debates. I never really understood the *Federalist*, especially Hamilton's loopy defense of the federal judiciary, until I followed the pamphlet war in New York. (For my money, Brutus beats Publius, and predicted the tyranny of the Supreme Court.) Remarkably, Professor Bailyn does a good job of letting each side speak for itself. This is a better volume than we had any right to expect from the 1990's.



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gyman who actually bears arms against the foe.

A reviewer in *National Review* complained that Gibson's character "does not fight for principle or country—at least not at first—but for vengeance. The relevant political institution is not South Carolina, but the family. This seems like a pretty serious cop-out for a film called 'The Patriot.'"

But maybe that's a point that few people today (especially at *National Review*) can understand—that patriotism begins with the family and works its way up; that nobody really fights for abstractions like "democracy" or "human rights" or "equality," but to protect hearth and home; and that when hearth and home are trampled and torched, you take revenge.

A people steeped in those principles probably doesn't need much else, and it won't have many enemies who can conquer it. If Americans have forgotten those principles, they can go see *The Patriot* and remember what their forebears really fought for.

—*Samuel Francis*

VLADIMIR PUTIN's war on the Russian oligarchs may have begun with the arrest of media magnate Vladimir Gusinsky in June, or so many Western observers hoped. Although Gusinsky was later released (after pledging to remain in Russia during the course of an embezzlement investigation against him), few in or out of Russia doubt that the Kremlin means business. After briefly bemoaning threats to "freedom of speech," many analysts in Europe and America have begun to view Putin as a Russian Pinochet who will sit on the oligarchs and ram through much-needed market reforms.

Such wishful thinking is a source of amusement to those of us who spend our time watching the machinations that have driven Russia to the brink of collapse. In fact, Gusinsky has been the target of the "family"—the cabal of insiders who ran Russia under Boris Yeltsin—for some time. Yeltsin, however, had an odd way of pulling Gusinsky's fat out of the fire whenever his nemesis, Boris A. Berezovsky, had drawn a bead on Gusinsky. Yeltsin preferred a certain balance among the oligarchs, preserving his role as arbiter in a den of thieves.

But Yeltsin is retired now, and the "family" did not arrange for Vladimir Putin to be elected president merely to preserve the status quo. They're aiming at a conclusion that Yeltsin would never have permitted: Gusinsky must be crushed, preferably by seizing his property. This would open the door to the "review of privatization" that Putin promised would not take place if he were elected.

It seems that the prosecutor's office was shocked to find that Gusinsky had privatized certain state assets using insider information. Moreover, his Media Most company, which controls the powerful NTV network, made a critical error in accumulating huge debts, setting the stage for the "family's" takeover of Gusinsky's assets. Meanwhile, "outsider" oligarchs who publicly defended Gusinsky may be in trouble themselves: In mid-June, Russian prosecutors opened a case involving the illegal privatization of one of Russia's biggest and most lucrative enterprises, metallurgy giant Norilsk Nikel, owned by longtime Berezovsky foe Vladimir Potanin. And Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov has also been questioned in an investigation of the city tax office.

Berezovsky has always pushed the political envelope, creating chaotic situations that inevitably redounded to his favor. It appears that he and his friends now desire all the oligarchs' marbles—and this was the ultimate aim of "Operation Putin." Whether those oligarchs outside the Kremlin circle can forge an effective counterattack, and whether Putin can break free of the "family's" hold on him, remains to be seen. Whatever happens, Russia's oligarchy, in one form or another, is here to stay.

— *Denis Petrov*

THE SUPREME COURT's closely watched October 1999 term came to an end on June 28, and its themes finally became clear: inconsistency, incoherence, and arbitrariness. On that last day, the Court released important decisions on abortion, aid to religious schools, and homosexual rights, and refused to intervene in the Elian Gonzalez case. The Supreme Court's decision in the Elian matter was at least understandable, because there was no legal issue in the case that really demanded the Court's resolution. (The law was clear enough; it was the facts of the Elian mess that caused all the dispute.) But in all the other cases, I was hard-pressed to figure out what was going on.

For several years now, the most reliable guide to Supreme Court decision-making has been Sandra Day O'Connor's position on an issue. She is indisputably the swing justice, and the best word that I can think of to characterize her jurisprudence is "capricious." She was against allowing student-led prayers before Texas high-school football games, but she was in favor of supplying computers, purchased with federal funds, to private religious schools. She voted to reject a prohibition on partial-birth abortion, but indicated she would be willing to uphold such a law if it included an exception for cases in which the "health" of the mother called for the procedure. She joined in the Court's decision that the First Amendment was not violated by banning anti-abortion speech within eight feet of women seeking to have an abortion, but she approved of the Court's decision that the Boy Scouts had a First Amendment right to prohibit gay scouts and scoutmasters.

Over the years, I have tried to discern a firm basis for Justice O'Connor's constitutional jurisprudence, but I have finally concluded that she still operates as if she were a state legislator. She decides what policy she favors, and then imposes it. The problem, of course, is that this is what *legislators* do; but judges are not supposed to be legislators.

Luckily, for those few of us who still believe in the rule of law—and the most simple definition of the rule of law is that "legislators legislate, and judges judge"—there are at least two, and perhaps as many as three or four current Supreme Court justices who share our faith. This term, Justices Scalia and Thomas pretty reliably refused to participate in the Court's more egregious usurpations of the legislative role, as did Justice Rehnquist (although I think he was wrong to go along with the majority in the anti-abortion free speech case). And even Justice Kennedy, whose participation in the majority in the Texas school prayer decision cannot be excused, did the right thing in the religious-school funding case and seems to have reversed his position in the 1992 *Planned Parenthood* v. *Casey* decision by siding with the dissenters in the partial-birth abortion case.

That's all to the good, but the emerging four-person conservative bloc cannot decide cases without Justice O'Connor, as Justices Stevens, Souter, Ginsburg, and Breyer have fairly consistently come down on the side of extending federal power and abortion rights, rigidly separat-

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ing morality and religion from the public square, and, in general, carrying out the extraconstitutional, policymaking legacy of the Warren Court.

Many of those on the Court who seem not to care about their constitutional role were Republican appointees, but it is the Democrats who want to make the future of Supreme Court policymaking a campaign issue. Al Gore was quick to declare that the precarious nature of the five-to-four majority in the partial-birth abortion case was a potential threat to abortion rights, and he urged the undecided to vote for him so that he could appoint more pro-abortion justices. A few weeks earlier, Justice Scalia reportedly confessed plans to retire should Al Gore win, because the sensible Scalia has no desire to remain on a Court dominated by "living constitution" types. George Bush has recently stated that, while he has no "litmus tests" for Supreme Court appointments, he wants to appoint more justices like Scalia and Thomas. I'm voting for Bush, and hoping he does.

—*Stephen B. Presser*

VUK DRASKOVIC, the leader of Serbia's major opposition party, was slightly wounded on June 15 when gunmen opened fire through a window of his holiday home in the Montenegrin coastal town of Budva. After being treated at a nearby hospital, Draskovic immediately accused Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic of masterminding "an assassination attempt." Two days later, Montenegrin police announced that they had detained the gunmen who had shot Draskovic and "knew who had ordered the shooting."

So far, so conventional: A ruthless dictator wants to get rid of an opposition politician and orders his thugs to assassinate him. But things are seldom what they seem in the Balkans. In Serbia, for instance, the opposition and the regime have one thing in common: They share an abiding contempt for Draskovic, the perennial leader of the Serbian Renewal Movement (SPO). Publicly, the opposition parties have condemned the shooting, and they are at least pretending to accept his claim that it was the work of Milosevic's secret police. But off the record, all Belgrade agrees that Draskovic concocted the plot to increase his popularity and diffuse tensions within his party—which, for the first time since its founding a decade ago, no longer uncritically accepts his erratic leadership.

Whenever Draskovic faces pressure, he seeks to resolve it through some dramatic gesture that will enable him to reinvent himself. His neurotic unpredictability—frustrating to his supporters and other opposition activists—has become intolerable since he survived a suspicious car crash in which his wife's brother and three bodyguards were killed last fall. "His volatility provoked howls of derision earlier this month, when he backtracked on a pledge to mount a united stand with other opposition parties at local and federal elections," writes journalist Zeljko Cvijanovic. Even some members of his own party suspect that he forged a pact with Milosevic to maintain corrupt SPO municipal authorities in several major Serbian cities: "The SPO leader's actions have also set him on a collision course with some in his party who believe he is trying to neuter its stand against the regime. They also resent his quarreling with other opposition parties with whom they believe they can co-operate. Other opposition leaders are increasingly reluctant to work with him."

The doubts about the veracity of Draskovic's claims were not dispelled by the arrests of the supposed assassins: Rumor has it that some of the suspects were actually members of his party or even personal bodyguards, which may imply complicity rather than lethal intent.

The account given by Draskovic of the event itself is unbelievable. For example, his wounds were superficial, but there was a massive pool of "blood" on the floor. He was—uncharacteristically—alone in the house, although he claims to have received death threats only days earlier. The bullet marks on the wall were far above his head. Balkan-affairs analyst Bob Djurdjevic concludes that there was no motive for the assassination: "Why would Slobodan Milosevic waste a bullet on a politician who has distinguished himself throughout his career by the ability to shoot himself in the foot? . . . Draskovic's botched 'assassination' has so far managed to kill only the target's own character and credibility."

Why indeed? *Cui bono*? With political enemies like Vuk Draskovic, Slobodan Milosevic needs no friends: His status as Serbia's president-for-life is secure. He has drawn Draskovic and his coterie into the temptation of corruption—they control four of the richest municipal authorities in Serbia. This has made them susceptible to Milosevic's blackmail, turning them into potential collaborators. "He has been able to use Draskovic as a willing or unwitting tool," says a prominent Belgrade opposition leader who asked to remain anonymous. "[Draskovic] would rather let Milosevic rule for another ten years than see anyone but himself in his place."

With each passing day, the scenario played out in Budva looks increasingly suspicious. Political killings in Serbia are one of the few growth industries; they are administered cleanly and efficiently. The list is long and includes a police general, a defense minister, and prominent organized crime figures. Had Milosevic really wanted to kill Draskovic, you would be reading an obituary.

—*Srdja Trifkovic*

OBITER DICTA: The *Chronicles* masthead continues to grow. **Philip Jenkins**, whose articles have appeared almost monthly for the past year, joined the masthead as a contributing editor with the July issue. **Janet Scott Barlow**, a frequent contributor to *Chronicles*, rejoins us as a corresponding editor. Her new book, *The Nonpatriotic President: A Survey of the Clinton Years*, will be released soon by our publishing imprint, Chronicles Press. And **George McCartney**, whose movie reviews have graced our pages for the past 15 months, has agreed to become our film editor. In addition, his reviews will now appear in a new monthly column, *In the Dark*, which can be found at the end of the *Vital Signs* section.

This month's *American Interest* column first appeared in the July issue of *World Report*, the quarterly newsletter of The Rockford Institute's Center for International Affairs. To receive a free sample copy of the newsletter, please write to **Christopher Check**, Executive Vice President, The Rockford Institute, 928 N. Main St., Rockford, IL 61103.

Our poet this month is **Gail White**, who lives in Breaux Bridge, Louisiana. Her poetry has been published in numerous magazines across the country. Her latest book, *Landscapes With Women* (Singular Speech Press), is a collection of the works of four women.

Our art is provided by **Bill Subik**, a free-lance illustrator living in New York City. His clients include *Brill's Content*, *Newsday*, and the *City Paper* of Washington, D.C. He is also a regular contributor to several magazines in Connecticut.

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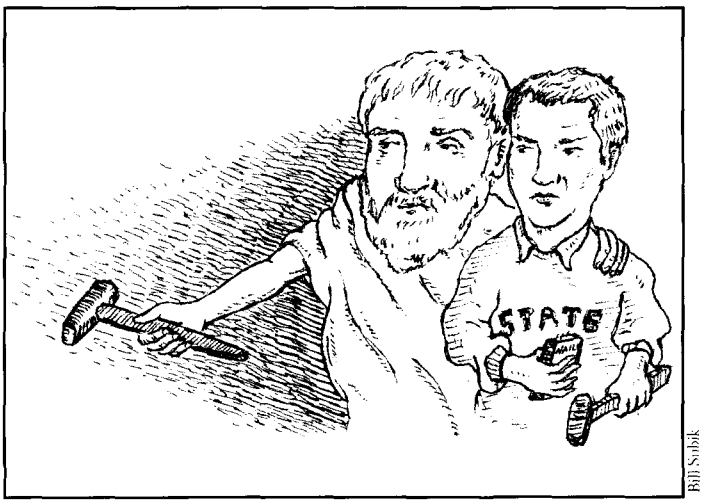

Bill Sudik

Burn This Book

by Thomas Fleming

Why do we send our children to school, much less to a college or a university? I have put this question to any number of parents, teachers, and headmasters and only rarely received a better answer than "So they can get a good job." Never having had what most people would call a good job, I take their word for it that taking out tonsils or keeping felons out of jail constitutes a good job, so long as it brings in more than 100k in the second or third year.

But surely it does not take 20 years of schooling to learn how to draw up a contract or even to perform a bypass operation. These technical skills could be taught successfully to teenagers who would be ready to receive their licenses by the age they normally enter (or at least finish) college. In fact, many American parents who want to prepare their children for a vocation are looking away from traditional colleges, which cost annually as much as a lower-middle-class worker makes in a year, and they are turning to apprenticeships and community colleges as cheaper methods of acquiring "the job skills you need in this competitive world," as the brochures put it, or "career training for the new millennium."

I think we can take it as given that colleges and universities are a waste of time and money—staffed, as they are, by lazy and incompetent anti-intellectuals—and while "higher" education has declined since the days of my youth, when I learned ancient Greek in a ramshackle Victorian house on Green Street in Charleston (or was it College Street?), American colleges have not amounted to much at any time in this century. Jacques Barzun and Thomas Molnar railed against the educational standards of the 1950's and 60's, and Albert Jay Nock was ridiculing the universities of his day over 50 years ago, pointing out that education had declined sharply between the 1880's and the 1930's. If there was a golden age of American education, it was clearly before the Revolution, when men like John Adams and Thomas Jefferson were growing up. It has been a hundred years since we had professors as educated as they were, to say nothing of presidents.

I also take it as given that there is a reason (apart from job skills or the need to reduce competition for jobs) that we stick young men and women in college for four to five crucial years of their lives. To discover that purpose, as it was once understood, we have to go back to the ideals of the Renaissance humanists or further still to Quintilian, who defined the end result of a training in rhetoric as a "good man skilled in speaking"; that is, a person of good character who had been trained to put his talents to useful purposes.

That ancient rhetorical curriculum, whose sources lie both in the Greek experience and in the writings of Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian, was eventually Christianized and turned into the medieval curriculum of "liberal arts." In recent years, that expression, when it does not evoke a sneer, is usually glossed as the "liberating arts."

I was surprised to learn that this interpretation goes back at least to Montaigne, who must have known that it was not literally true—that, in fact, the *artes liberales* (from Greek *technai eleutherai*?) were the pursuits worthy of a free man (as opposed to the training given to a slave, peasant, or manual worker). In

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his essay on the "Education of Children," Montaigne wanted to debunk the French schooling of his day, and in writing about the proper subjects of study, he puts moral studies first, adding this curious aphorism: "Among the liberal arts, let us begin with the art that makes us free." ("*Entre les arts liberaux, commençons par l'art qui nous fait libres.*") Free from what? He does not say, although the purpose of Montaigne's essay—of all his essays, in fact—is the type of liberation that has been sought by schoolmen throughout this century, and it is worth our effort to spend a little time wrestling with this slippery Frenchman of five centuries ago.

Montaigne began his education at home, under a system devised by an indulgent father who prescribed that nothing but Latin should be spoken in young Michel's presence. By the age of five or six, he had learned enough to be able to read Latin for the rest of his life as if it were his mother tongue. Sent to an ordinary school, Michel rebelled against the routine and especially against the discipline: "I have always disliked this system of discipline in most of our schools. They might have erred with less damage on the side of indulgence. It is a veritable jail for imprisoned youth."

Like nearly all modern educators, Montaigne believed that strict rules and severe punishments were counterproductive, and he wanted education to proceed according to the natural bent of the child. He was an early advocate, in other words, of "child-centered" learning, and he would make a science out of children's games, which "are not games," he said, and "have to be judged as their most serious activities." What Montaigne failed—or refused—to consider is the basic purpose of education, which is not to stuff information into children's heads or even to teach them Latin. "The end," as Calder Willingham expressed it in the title of the only real novel ever written about the Citadel, "is a man."

Montaigne agreed that the purpose of studying was not pedantry but character development, but like many social parvenus (his father was descended from a long line of increasingly wealthy merchants; his mother was a Protestant of Spanish Jewish background), he was more concerned with being a gentleman than with being merely a man, much less a good man. All healthy and successful cultures have been aggressively virile: Athens almost as much as Sparta, the Hebrews of Joshua's time and the Romans of the early republic, medieval Europe and medieval Japan, frontier America.

To produce the tough and resolute men who create, sustain, and defend civilization requires a discipline that more closely resembles Parris Island than the Fantasy Island schooling in America that leaves no whim unfulfilled, no vicious tendency unstimulated. Imposing academic rigor and tough discipline may be the most difficult challenge faced by homeschooling parents, even those less indulgent than Michel's father—in my own case, I have to confess to complete failure.

To make the process of learning easy and "fun" has been the object of educational reformers for the past several centuries. Walter Scott complained of this tendency in his own day, warning that, if children are taught to regard learning as a game, they will rebel against any learning which is necessarily serious. Montaigne was too dense even to learn from his own experience. Learning Latin as a native language, he never had to slog through day after day of rote memorization of vocabulary and grammatical paradigms. As a result, when the time came for him to learn Greek, as he confesses, he made no headway—nor with any other demanding subject.

Well, there is no harm in a gentleman not knowing Greek, he would say, but Montaigne's indulged childhood had more serious consequences. His father, in the belief that children should not be startled first thing in the morning, had him awakened to music, and there is a luxurious, cowardly streak that runs through Michel's life. As mayor, he refused to return to Bordeaux when plague broke out in the city. A pardonable offense, perhaps, but he was a weak sensualist in other matters. In his essay "On Experience," he confesses that his sexual activity began so early that he could not remember when he had ever been chaste, and the dirty little stain running throughout his writings is an obsession with talking about sex, describing his bowel movements, and referring offhandedly to urination.

Where was the Inquisition when we needed it?

Montaigne had, quite simply, a dirty mind that he wanted to share with the world. It was wrong, he thought, to shield children from the facts of life. Even in dissipation, he says, the model student should outdo his comrades, and the ideal sage (as he observes in "On Experience") should be as well versed in the mysteries of Venus and Bacchus as in other areas of life. This is not the robust paganism of the ancient world, but the sly and drooling neopaganism that dares not confront Christianity except with a sneer and a lie.

Montaigne spent his whole life alternately undermining the Church's authority and ingratiating himself with those who exercised it. Even the *Catholic Encyclopedia* takes his deathbed theatrical display seriously—or pretends to. Perhaps he was serious. It is not for us to judge, but I have more confidence in the conversion of the combative atheist than in the professions of a lifelong hypocrite who feigned obedience while insinuating the poison of infidelity into the mainstream of French cultural life. Shelley, it has been thought, might have become a Christian, had he lived longer. Montaigne could have outlived Dracula and still died with a sneer.

If Christianity were superstitious bigotry, compared with the wisdom of Socrates and Plutarch, then the civilization of Christendom would be a barbaric deviation from the true path of enlightenment. This is precisely the position Montaigne takes in one of his most significant essays, "On the Cannibals," where he slyly undermines the monarchy, the Church, and France itself by comparing them with the Latin American savages who are physically superior to Europeans and inferior in no other respect.

Montaigne may have been the first important multiculturalist in Europe, and his feigned preference for savages he had merely seen without knowing was only a ploy—just as his intellectual descendants in American universities prate about cultural diversity without ever learning the languages or cultures of other nations. "On the Cannibals" is not a singular outburst: His contempt for Christendom is a recurrent theme. In "On Experience," for example, he preaches a doctrine of cultural diversity and human variability that would have delighted Margaret Mead. After a summary of the strange things other people do, Montaigne concludes: "Each nation has many customs and habits that are not only not known, but seem savage and bizarre

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to some other nation."

Then how do we choose? Montaigne has no difficulty in deciding that other nations and cultures are superior to his own. While French legal institutions "by their lack of rule and form encourage disorder and corruption," China is a "kingdom whose government and arts, without having any intercourse or knowledge of our own, surpasses what we have to offer in many branches of excellence." In the "Apology for Raimond Sebond," he takes the final step of equating man with the beasts to which he attributes rational powers: "When I play with my cat, who knows but that she regards me more as a plaything than I do her?"

E.J. Trenchman, a scholar and admirer of Montaigne whose "authoritative" translation of this passage I have quoted, describes the "Apology" as "the most important and most interesting of the Essays," adding that it is "pretty clear, if we keep in mind Montaigne's hint to the wise to 'catch his meaning' and read between the lines, that the title was intentionally misleading, and that the whole chapter is an attack on Christian beliefs in general."

For this, among other reasons, Montaigne was put on the Index in the 17th century, and although less rigorous generations of Catholics have preferred not to understand the purpose of Montaigne's relentless, Pyrrhonist skepticism—if only because he is one of the masters of French prose and (to give the Devil his due) a writer as engaging as Voltaire. But Diderot was correct in admiring Montaigne as his master, and the Jacobins were also right to want to remove his body to a shrine in Paris. (Unfortunately, in a classic Jacobin screwup, they got the wrong body.)

So now we know what it was that Montaigne wanted to liberate us from: from Christendom, from Christianity as a religion binding on our conscience and moral behavior, and from Christ himself. This sly little Gascon is at once the foundation of Western self-hatred and one of the fathers of modern education. His celebrated "*que sais-je?*" is both a justification for his own self-abusing introspection and an invitation to the rationalist fury that Descartes—another hypocrite—unleashed upon the Christian world. It is the self-inflating irony of the teenager who asks, with a melodramatic flourish, "What do I know?" about this or that, meaning "I know as much as I need to know, with or without any of your so-called knowledge."

Montaigne's skepticism dissolves all faith, not just Christian faith, but faith in all forms of legitimate authority—that of parents, tradition, the Church. And not just the Catholic Church: Montaigne despised Luther for thinking he knew the truth or believing there was a truth that could be known. If decent American parents wish to set their children upon the proper path, whether they are planning a preschool program or a course of professional preparation, they had better begin with the recognition that the evils of modern education go back to the 16th century and that these evil principles are shot through our failing culture like streaks of gangrene through a rotting limb.

It is only fair to hold Montaigne responsible for the toxins he introduced into Europe. He is "that man by whom the offence cometh," as Jesus told his disciples (Matthew 18:7).

"Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life, halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire."

Where was the Inquisition when we needed it? c

DICTATIONS

Liberating Students From the Liberators

The "liberal arts" have come to mean the arts that turn people into liberals. Anti-Christians as early as Montaigne have played on the expression as the "liberating" arts. Montaigne must have known that *artes liberales*, translating directly from the Greek, refers to the skills and practices that distinguish the character of the free man from the servile classes of slaves, serfs, and employees.

For Greeks and Romans, the free man, however poor, owned his own land and maintained his economic independence; he took care of his own wife and children; he had the means and the willingness to fight in defense of his people. Beyond these basic requirements, the free man had the means to defend his religion and culture, which meant that he had to have some mental and social training. He had committed large chucks of Homer and other poets to memory; he knew how to conduct himself at a party, to drink moderately, to sing and dance; when called upon as a witness or defendant in court or to serve his country in some civil capacity, he could speak his language correctly, organize his thoughts, and persuade his fellow citizens.

As time went on, Greek sophists and philosophers claimed to have a monopoly on mental cultivation; practical parents, however, were more inclined to trust the teachers of rhetoric. Although Plato tried to give the rhetoricians a bad name, Aristotle took their craft seriously enough to devote an important book to it, his *Rhetoric*. The model rhetor (or orator), in Aristotle's scheme, is a master of style, but he also displays a knowledge of logic, ethics, and psychology. The object of this kind of education was to produce not a brilliant theoretician in physics or metaphysics but a prudent and practical man, wise and good, who could serve his friends and be of use to his country.

This was the ideal that was passed down to Cicero and Quintilian, to the teachers of the Middle Ages, to the best of the Renaissance humanists, and to their heir Samuel Johnson. It was not a technical education in logic or mathematics, though it included both, nor (although the rhetoricians devoted their lives to literature) was it a study of literature for literature's sake or for the purpose of pursuing hermeneutic studies at the expense of some helpless poet or novelist. Major writers were studied as models for good prose and sound composition, and the results can be seen in all the Western writers from Cicero to Petrarch to Shakespeare to Dr. Johnson to A.E. Housman, a fine poet (and finer scholar) who despised literary criticism. Nothing would so rapidly improve the cultural and literary standards of the modern world (apart from the reimposition of Latin) than the recovery of this great rhetorical tradition of the liberal arts that, far from liberating its students from religion and custom, bind them securely to the traditions of their ancestors.

—Humpty Dumpty

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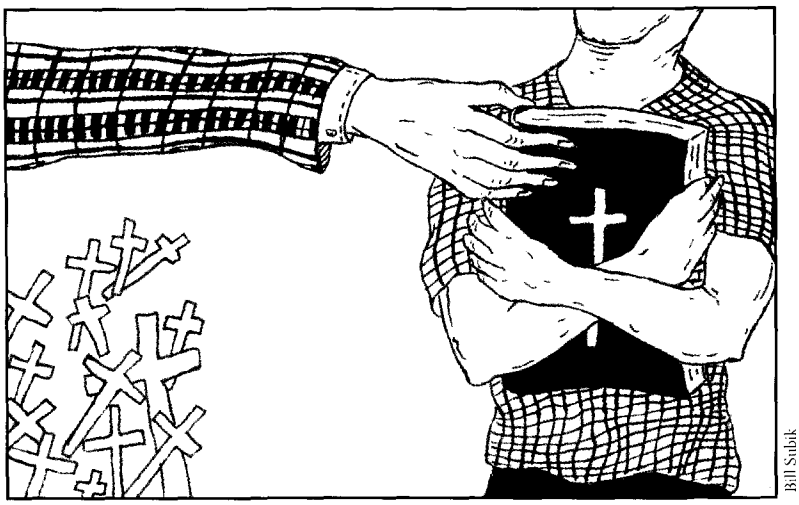
After the Avalanche

The Reemergence of Colleges in Christ

by James Patrick



Bill Stibik

When C.S. Lewis wrote that there was more distance between us and Jane Austen than between Jane Austen and Plato, he was remarking on a cataclysm that colleges and universities had not escaped. The charters of colleges founded before the Age of Jackson reiterated the claim that the purpose of an educational institution was always, as the founders of Columbia (then King's College) wrote, to teach Jesus Christ. As late as 1838, the statutes of the University of North Carolina forbade any derogation of the Christian religion in the university. The marriage between Christ and classical literature was then 16 centuries old. Beginning with St. Justin Martyr's principle that whatever has been said rightly belongs to Christians, the Church espoused the teaching of a Christian classicism intended originally to provide an effective apology and, after Constantine, to make schoolboys not only intellectually well-furnished citizens but Christians.

Before the mid-19th century, most *entrance* examinations assumed an ability to read the New Testament, Vergil, and Cicero in the original languages, as well as a mastery of Euclid. Today, this standard is not even attained by most who *teach* in colleges and universities.

Before 1860, colleges were not marketplaces of ideas. That students were to be taught not *what* to think but *how* to think was considered absurd. Colleges were microcosmic cities calculated to make their citizens members of a culture, of a moral and intellectual order rooted in Athens, Rome, Sinai, and Jerusalem. (And in America, where most 18th- and 19th-century colleges were founded by Congregationalists and Presbyterians, rooted also in Geneva.) The transcendent collegiate purpose was the forming of souls pleasing to God; the temporal purpose was the furnishing of bar, bench, and pulpit, and, more broadly, the equipping of the gentlemen who would hold commissions and sit on the county court, each of whom was expected to bring into the villages of a new country something of the wisdom and politics of ancient Greece and Rome. Lighthorse Harry Lee advised his son at Harvard to "Dwell on the virtues, and to adhere to History and Ethical Authors of universal character." John Adams advised John Quincy to study Sallust, Cicero, Livy, and Tacitus in order to learn wisdom and virtue, noting that his son would see in them "all the Charms which Language and Imagination can exhibit, and Vice and Folly painted in all their Deformity and Horror. The end of study is to make you a good man and a useful citizen." The curriculum was designed to transfer Christian classicism from one generation to the next. Neither Adams nor Lee would have been happy to learn that Harvard and other colleges today do not care to teach their students what to admire and whom to obey.

A study completed this past spring titled *Great Expectations: How the Public and Parents—White, African American, and Hispanic—View Higher Education* contains a survey asking the question, "What Should a Student Gain from College?" The most popular goal, understandably dear to the heart of every parent, is "A sense of maturity and how to manage on their own"—a fine purpose, but one accomplished most successfully and at least expense by a stint in the Army or a job in another city. Next in popularity was the diversity goal: "An ability to get along with people different from themselves." The third goal is something a college might conceivably do—namely, the Deweyan goal to "Teach an improved ability to solve problems and think analytically." Following this are the career-related expertise goal, the high-tech goal, writing and speaking, and the citizenship goal of voting and volunteering. Eighth and last is "Exposure to great writers and thinkers in subjects like literature

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and history." Only 32 percent of those polled considered this last goal essential.

None of the top goals of those surveyed would have been counted among the primary purposes of collegiate learning before that sudden frost Evelyn Waugh called, in *Brideshead Revisited*, The Age of Hooper. Instead, these goals suggest a culture populated by what C.S. Lewis called trousered apes and urban blockheads; a civilization based, Jacques Maritain wrote, upon the fecundity of money and the tyranny of the useful. This is the popular made-for-sale culture whose philosophers are the gently ironic, relentlessly relativistic Garrison Keillor and the rootlessly conservative, pro-capitalist Rush Limbaugh; a culture whose political theory is displayed on the Sunday morning talk shows, whose sensual edge is HBO and MTV, and whose piety tends toward a religious atheism, a sentimental detritus consisting of therapy, belonging, and making this world a "better place."

The postmodern college is a perfect mirror of this culture. It has developed what the 19th century called natural philosophy into effective disciplines that daily wring from nature fruits for mankind, but stand mute with regard to the goods of the human soul. Within its walls, the study of religion as a purely human phenomenon inculcates a kind of atheism, while its philosophies teach relativism and subjectivism. Of course, there are many happy exceptions, and it is always true that a bright 18-year-old, located in a university with 50,000 students and 5,000 professors, may happen upon true and soul-transforming things. But the contemporary college is primarily concerned with diversity, maturity, and career expertise.

Cultural revolution is like an avalanche. First, silently, a tiny fissure appears, or one stone shifts almost imperceptibly. It slowly gathers speed, then comes the avalanche, catastrophic in its destructiveness. The fissure was the failure of philosophy in the 14th century. Then came the angelism of Descartes, the attempt to know the world apart from its body; then Hume's attack on speculative reason, that light with which we grasp reality; and then the elliptical attempt of Kant to root an objective order of knowledge in human subjectivity, an idea now represented by our cultural certainty that everything depends on one's point of view. The movement began in 1789, but it was checked by the Congress of Vienna and by the holy intransigence of Popes Gregory XVI and Pius IX. In America, the avalanche was effectively forestalled by 19th-century religion, the Protestant Christianity of the countryside and small towns reinforced by the Catholic piety of Southern European immigrants of 1840-1870. As late as 1950, the movement made no noise. The late John Senior noted that, in 1941, an Episcopalian bishop of New York prevented Bertrand Russell from taking an appointment at City College because Russell taught immorality; but today, should any institution attempt to prevent such teaching, bishops might well be found across the picket lines, protesting the infringement of every student's right to enjoy the liberating sensuality of his or her choice. The Enlightenment, as E. Michael Jones has argued convincingly, came to America in the 1960's, and we have lived through the avalanche.

This vast movement from the first failure of philosophy in the 14th century to the fruition of the Enlightenment—marked finally by tyranny (the managerial state), terror (gulags and ovens), and license (the sexual revolution, rendered secure by the pill and *Roe* v. *Wade*)—was the matrix in which the specific educational themes that created the new culture were nurtured in the 19th century. Any catalog of these themes would include the utilitarianism of John Stuart Mill, Sir Robert Peel, Lord Brougham, Benjamin Rush, and Horace Mann. In 1840, Peel and Brougham elicited from Cardinal Newman perhaps his most vehement essay, "The Tamworth Reading Room," because they had proposed improving the English people by providing information about drainage.

The Prussian system, which made learning a function of the state, was the ideal vehicle for institutionalizing the educational utilitarianism of Peel. Made law by Frederick William III in 1819, this system was the remote progenitor of the U.S. House Committee bearing the ominous title, "Education and the Work Force." It was universalist, utilitarian, and dedicated to the creation of reliable citizens and workers. The Prussian system gave us bells, credit hours, Ph.D.'s, and education schools, the function of teaching having been transformed by making it an operant skill. Massachusetts, not surprisingly, was entranced by the Prussian system.

Any catalog of the themes that demolished the old colleges must also include egalitarianism. God, St. Thomas Aquinas argued, did not create equality, which may explain why it is so difficult for us to do so. When all students must be educated in the same way, education will consist of what *all* can learn, and since the powers of mankind are various, education will, to the degree that the ideal is enforced, consist of what the least talented can learn. Education, properly represented, should offer the best to the best; or, following the advice of Mortimer Adler, the college may offer the best to everyone, allowing each to learn what he can, but when the college takes this path, it accepts the proposition that not all will succeed.

Success in the classical curriculum represented real achievement and required application as well as intellect. One would be mistaken, when reviewing the curriculum of 1820, in assuming that every boy had mastered at the same high level everything in Dalzell's *Graeca Majora*, that great anthology of Greek texts that ran from the pre-Socratics to Pausanias, or all of Terence and Horace. But he had learned something of the best.

The purpose of the classical curriculum was as much to make collegians Greeks and Romans as it was to make them great classicists, and, in the process, to make them men of virtue and, yes, Christians. At their core, Europe and her colonial dependencies are Vergil, Homer, and the Bible: a literature told in two languages that, until recently, lay just beneath the surface of our speech. Newman, in an inspired essay titled "Christianity and Letters," pointed out that Europe was Europe because it possessed a story, a literature, and a philosophy. Cicero had been in schoolboys' satchels in the reign of Augustus, and he was still there when Newman wrote his *Idea of a University* in defense of the kind of study that made young men citizens of a common civilization stretching from Plato to the Oxford Colleges he had known in the early 1820's. T.S. Eliot, in his 1942 essay *The Classics and the Man of Letters*, wrote, "The culture of Europe, such as it is, is a Christian culture; and conversely, the traditional religious faith of Europe, including Britain, cannot preserve its intellectual vigor unless a high standard of Greek and Latin scholarship is maintained among its teachers." Musing in the afterglow of Allied victory in 1945, Winston Churchill remarked to his physician, Lord Moran, that great things had disappeared during his lifetime. One was classical learning: Men no longer study the classics, Churchill noted,

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adding, "It was an advantage when there was one common discipline and every nation studied the doings of two states. Now, they learn how to mend motor cars."

Of all the differences between the old college and the new, the most obvious is the absence of Jesus Christ from the presuppositions that underlie academic life. Thomas Arnold, the emblematic English schoolmaster, saw his purpose as the cure of souls. His aim was not an institution in which Christianity was the subject of the curriculum, but one in which Christianity was the context for learning. Where Christ cannot be named, theology cannot be taught, and philosophy, which leads the intellect into that borderland beyond which lie answers that can only be given by God, becomes rationalistic, then relativistic, and ultimately damaging.

These were the forces that undid collegiate learning. The colleges changed because the culture changed, and the culture changed because the colleges changed. The attempt to discover causal priority is unrewarding. But the only way to have another kind of culture is to have another kind of college. Book clubs may help, and the Church itself may carry in its sacred rhetoric memories of the great tradition, but what is required is a seminary for the reawakening of another kind of culture, another kind of college, one in which God is honored as the source of truth and students are made citizens of the great civilization that began in Sinai and Athens. Such colleges must inevitably, for the time being, be countercultural in the sense in which the 1960's revolutionaries, then already a kind of incipient establishment, merely pretended to be. These new colleges will be located at the periphery of cosmopolitan postmodernity. They will be staffed by men and women who see themselves as missionaries of the great tradition, and who will bear gladly the modest hardships of such missions. Wherever they are found—and sometimes they are within the walls of the regnant culture's universities—these are the unlikely monastics of the 21st century, keeping alight the flame of learning amidst the bright darkness of the secular city. They are responsible not only for maintaining the great tradition but for enlarging it by incorporating the literature of the greatest intellectual event of modernity: the Catholic revival begun in the mid-19th century by Newman, Migne, and Leo XIII, which produced such rare spirits as Eliot, Flannery O'Connor, Maritain, Étienne Gilson, Allen Tate, Maurice Baring, G.K. Chesterton, Evelyn Waugh, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Walker Percy—the list goes on.

To hope that these colleges, if they are loyal to Christ and to Vergil, will be enthusiastically nurtured by the culture of our age is an illusion. Their secondary purposes are the first items in the list of parents' goals: Getting along, knowing others from diverse backgrounds, problem solving, and the rest. But this commonality of purpose makes the countercultural college a marginal member of the American collegiate enterprise. They—*we*—will do well to live quietly, thereby escaping (at least for the time being) the toils of compulsory diversity and toleration. And if their real purpose—the reading of the great tradition in the light of Christ—becomes obvious and the colleges must forego the approval of the citizens of the secular city, these little commonwealths will still enjoy the approval of that more significant political culture: the City of God.

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How Metaphors Are Made

by Gail White

In Turkey I was given a silk cocoon:
a small white oval, a hummingbird's egg in thread.
Inside it the silkworm rattled like a bean
(naturally I assumed the thing was dead).
It came home in my jewelry box. Weeks later,
going to bed, I found a white moth perched
on the white cocoon, a resurrection myth
indeed. Now what to do with it? I searched
the reference books. It seemed the silkworm fed
on mulberry leaves. Here in the moss-hung South
starvation seemed assured. Nevertheless,
I put the white thing out in the night's wet mouth
for what slim chance it had. By morning, both
cocoon and moth were gone. Perhaps a nest
was richer for the silk. For bats or owls
perhaps cocoons are easy to digest.
But now imagination was at work
and soon a host of things—poetry, love,
Russia, geometry, the Aztecs, even
the universe itself as seen by God—
could be regarded in a single light:
surprising silkmoths, thrown to an alien night.

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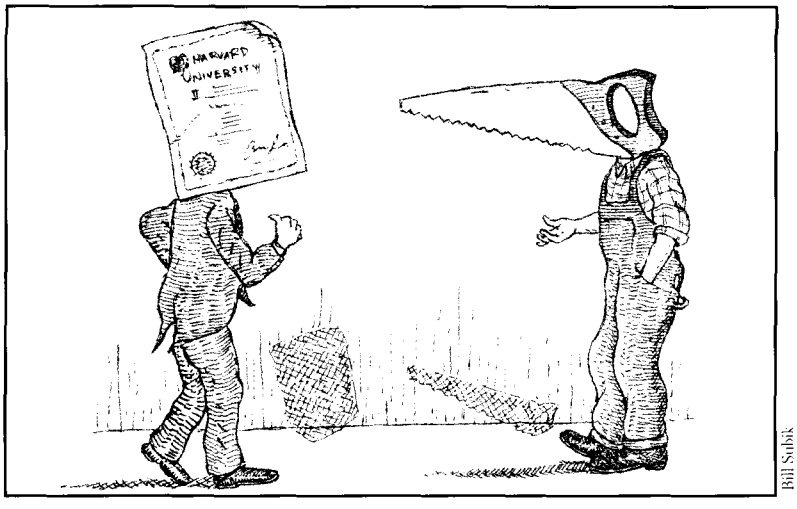
Going the Distance

How Homeschoolers Will Change College

by Mary Pride



Bill Stobbe

Homeschooling parents are all too aware of the hazards they face in signing up a beloved child for four years at Ivy U, Good Old State U, or even Used-to-be Christian College. Even if the institution in question does not hand out condoms like candy during orientation week and does not require courses that indoctrinate students in beliefs contrary to their faith, such aberrations could pop up at any time. Plus, there's the "Roommate from Hell" problem. All this sexual activity, drug use, and whatnot has to occur somewhere on campus, and most parents would probably just as soon that it was not happening in their child's dorm room.

I have been pondering the college problem very seriously. After all, what is the point of homeschooling our kids for years just to pay for the privilege of having them intellectually or physically harassed or seduced?

My suggestion: *eliminate, skip, or sidestep the first two years of college.*

Those years on campus are the most fraught with politically correct shibboleths and usually the least educationally worthwhile. Increasingly, they resemble the last two years of high school—or even the last few years of grade school.

Meanwhile, more and more homeschooled students are graduating from high school at age 17, 16, 15, or even younger. At home, it just does not take as long to whiz through the requirements for high-school graduation. So what do we end up with? Students who are ready for college *academically* but who may not be ready *emotionally* for the college atmosphere of sex, drugs, and anticulturalism. Here are some alternatives.

Mary Pride is the publisher of Practical Homeschooling *and editor of* The Big Book of Home Learning, *now in its fourth edition. She and her husband, Bill, have nine homeschooled children.*

Apprenticeship. There used to be a lot of noise in the homeschool community about the value of apprenticeship as opposed to a college degree. Right or wrong, however, most personnel directors believe that a college diploma is valuable, not for the sake of the education, but because it proves that a potential worker has the ability to stick to a long and arduous task dictated by authority. (So they have told me, anyway.) Even if a homeschool graduate finds a business willing to train him, he may end up trapped in that same company forever, as other companies continue to enforce hiring policies that require a college degree.

Entrepreneurship. Starting your own business immediately upon graduation from high school is an increasing trend, among the Web-minded in particular (for example, my oldest son, Ted). We all know that Bill Gates ditched Harvard to start Microsoft, so this particular road-less-traveled is becoming more socially acceptable. It also makes a certain amount of economic sense, provided the graduate in question has an actual money-making skill or idea. Why pay $100,000 or more to provide your child with computer-programming classes in the hope that he might get hired for an entry-level job, when he can make $100,000 during the same period, teach himself more computer languages and programming tricks than the college can, and build an excellent portfolio?

In our case, there are additional factors. Ted has physical problems that keep him largely bedridden, so attending a campus facility would be out of the question. The amount of time he spends sitting up could either be spent taking courses or building his business. He has chosen to be an entrepreneur, and so far, he is doing quite well.

Still, most parents and students will incline toward that coveted college sheepskin. What college-compatible alternatives are homeschoolers exploring?

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Community/Local College. In recent years, homeschooling families have found that two plus two costs less than four. Attending a community college for two years enables their 16-year-old student to live at home, saves them lots of money, gives the student practice in going to college, and results in credits that can be transferred to a more prestigious institution. The downside is that these are usually not two years of educational challenge. However, if parents start their high-school student on some community-college courses, usually they can make the course count twice for credit. In the excellent book *Gifted Children at Home*, coauthor Kathleen Julicher relates the story of enrolling her 12-year-old, Seth, in a local university's math class. He not only ended up with the top grade in the class, but he was invited to assist in teaching the class. By the time he graduated high school, he had already amassed two years of college credit.

Testing Out. The increased emphasis on educational excellence in general, and classical education in particular, sweeping the homeschool movement has caused an upsurge of interest in Advanced Placement (A.P.) courses. The vast majority of colleges and universities grant credit for high marks on any of the 29 A.P. exams. Recently, the College Board has begun advertising its College Level Exam Program (CLEP) in homeschool magazines. Over 2,800 institutions grant college credit for acceptable scores on any of the 34 CLEP exams. The Regents College Examination Program has also shown interest in getting more homeschoolers to take its tests, which are accepted for college credit by over 1,000 colleges and universities.

It is possible to get one year or more of college credit through A.P., CLEP, and Regents exams. Pennsylvania Homeschoolers (*www.pahomeschoolers.com*) and Scholars Online Academy (*www.islas.org*) offer excellent online A.P. courses to homeschoolers. If a student qualifies as "gifted" through any of the regional Talent Search programs, software-based A.P. courses are available from Stanford University's Educational Program for Gifted Youth. Some of the Talent Search programs also offer intensive on-site three-week summer A.P. courses. And Paul Allen, the cofounder of Microsoft, has put some serious money into an online academy called Apex (*www.apex.netu.com*), whose mission is to offer A.P. courses nationwide. Apex originally was set up to supplement local high-school course offerings, since most schools offer either no or only a few A.P. courses. As of fall 2000, ten courses are available at $395 per semester. If Apex plays its cards right, homeschoolers should be among its best customers.

At present, homeschoolers can take high-school correspondence courses from a variety of state colleges, such as University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Texas Tech, University of Wisconsin, and Indiana State University. I have been talking to the people who run these programs for years, urging them to add a complete lineup of A.P. courses to their curricula. They may do so soon, perhaps in time to compete with Apex before it becomes the Microsoft of A.P. training.

I should mention one thing: A.P.'s are not like the SATs or ACT, which you can sign up for yourself. You have to enroll through a local high school, and the school is under no legal obligation to offer the exams you need. We initially had trouble with our local high school, which was willing to let our children take A.P. exams for the courses that it taught (even though they had not attended the course) but did not want to let them sign up for A.P. exams in subjects the high school did not offer. The private schools in our area that offer A.P. exams also declined. A friendly state legislator had to talk to the school superintendent on our behalf before our kids could take the A.P. Microeconomics and A.P. Computer Science exams. All the school has to do is send in the sign-up sheet with a check, provide a proctor, and mail in the tests. Since they are the only ones who can do this, it seems only fair that anyone in the local community should be able to avail himself of these tests, not just the students who attend the school and take a particular course.

There is, however, one downside of "testing out" of a year or more of college: Most scholarships are reserved for entering freshmen. If your child enters as a sophomore, he could miss out on some lucrative scholarships. It is wise to check the policies of the institution he hopes to attend *before* digging into more than three or four A.P. courses. The College Board itself recommends, "Unless told to do so, do not send your CLEP scores until you have been officially admitted."

College at Home. Even better than the increased availability of A.P. and other college-credit exams would be the increased availability of college at home. Most colleges realize this, which is why just about every one is working toward making at least some of its curriculum available through distance learning. Witness the bulk of the latest guides to distance learning, compared to the slender editions available only a few years ago.

What is not yet available—and is desperately needed—is a two-year liberal-arts curriculum designed for homeschooled students. Patrick Henry College, a project initiated by the Homeschool Legal Defense Association, looks like the first step toward a campus-based version of what we need in distance education. Patrick Henry College can only accommodate 200 students, will offer initially only one major (government), and is not even considering any distance-education component until it has received accreditation, which will take years. However, the founders of the college have the right idea academically. They realize that the average homeschool graduate is already a voracious reader with a wide background in literature and history; an eager learner; a logical thinker who is aware of differing worldviews; and a believer in God and traditional moral values.

Thus, freshman college courses for this group might resemble graduate courses in their depth of discussion. Hands-on and real-world practice is appreciated by homeschoolers, and the Patrick Henry College program is designed to include much of this. (See *www.phc.edu* for details.)

The ideal distance-education college program for homeschoolers would combine hands-on projects and Great Books studies, of the kind popularized in America by St. John's College. Follow this with a year of traveling in Europe or working in various jobs, and a student would be well prepared for the final two years of college, in which vocational (or at least major-related) studies predominate.

I predict that the first accredited, non-politically impaired college or university that comes up with a classical distance-education program such as the one I have described will make a mint from homeschoolers, as long as it is priced affordably. High-school online courses are settling into the range of $200 to $395 per semester. Even at quadruple that amount, college at home would be a bargain, and both the professors and the administrators could live on the revenues. With hundreds of thousands of homeschooled students now in their high-school years, I see no reason why a number of competing institutions should not end up with thousands of off-campus students apiece, just from the homeschool community.

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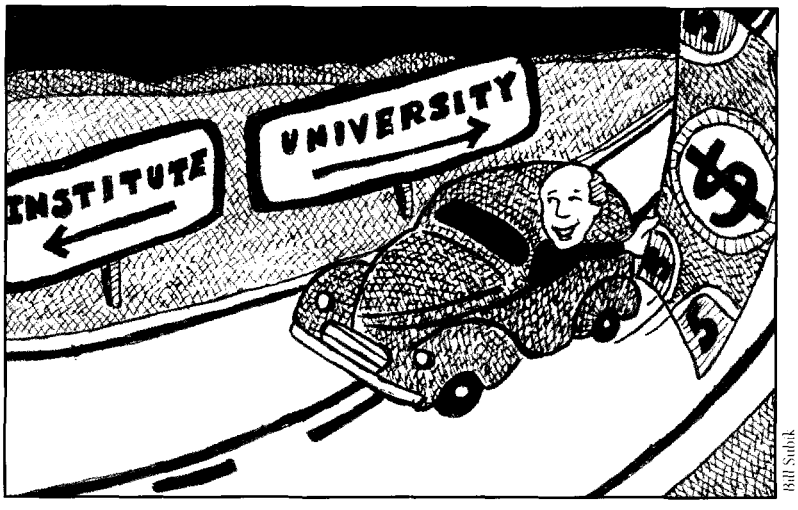
Barbecue Shacks, Palmetto Groves, and Other Schools

Betting on the Hedges

by Donald W. Livingston



The smog of political correctness hangs heavily over most American colleges and universities. Since the politically correct are intolerant, support only their own style of research, and hire and tenure only their own kind, this condition may well be with us for two generations. This has led some to despair over the fate of higher education in the humanities. But such despair takes the universities entirely too seriously. Humane learning has not always had its source in established educational institutions. The origins of the Western university lie in the rhetorical and philosophical schools that sprang up in ancient Greece, and as these institutions degenerated into the sterile eclecticism of late antiquity, new sources of learning emerged from small Christian communities seeking to interpret the gospels within the framework provided by Plato and Aristotle. These communities gathered up the remnants from the wreckage of pagan Greek and Roman civilization, eventually building the great universities of medieval Europe. These flourished for four centuries before hardening into the academic self-absorption of late scholasticism, against which what we call modern thought rebelled.

The most influential modern philosophers were found almost exclusively outside the universities: Montaigne, Machiavelli, Bacon, Hobbes, Pascal, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Mandeville, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Rousseau, Montesquieu, Mill, Nietzsche, Marx, Kierkegaard. They occupied not the position of professor but of lens grinder, gentleman, secretary, statesman, librarian, government official, corporate executive, and even beggar. The writings of this "republic of letters" became the canon of modern universities. The lesson is plain: Institutions of higher learning, over time, become self-absorbed and decadent. When that happens, it is necessary to secede from those institutions and to seek new venues for learning.

Secessionist tendencies today are found everywhere, but they often take a peculiar form. Building new universities is desirable, but too expensive; serious reform is not possible in the foreseeable future. Postmodern, politically correct fundamentalism controls the administration and the faculty, but it does not control the students. They belong to families and communities which often have strong religious and regional identities. Many students find the tone of postmodern fundamentalism not only morally absurd but boring. The ritual is the same everywhere: traditional American society is racist, sexist, classist, homophobic, and the chief obstacle to a global universalist civilization. Many students have sufficient virtue from their upbringing to sense that they are surrounded by something profoundly distorted and dehumanizing, but they do not have the intellectual resources to understand precisely what is wrong.

To meet this need, a great number of "institutes" of higher learning have spontaneously emerged to educate students outside the university in summer schools, conferences, and seminars. Students meet scholars of national and international reputation who open to them avenues of learning they are not likely to find in their normal course of study. Armed with new questions and insights, students are able to put the resources of the university to better effect, engaging in serious intellectual debate with their teachers and classmates.

One of these is the League of the South (LS) Institute for the Study of Southern Culture and History. Over 50 scholars in higher education have signed on to the Institute's mission to recover what T.S. Eliot called "the permanent things," as they are revealed in the Southern tradition. This tradition has provided a searing critique of the spiritual and intellectual pathologies of modern society. This criticism flows from a long line of South-

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ern thinkers: Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, George Mason, St. George Tucker, John Randolph, Abel Upshur, John C. Calhoun, William Gilmore Simms, Albert Taylor Bledsoe, Robert Louis Dabney, Basil Gildersleeve, the Nashville Agrarians, Richard M. Weaver, M.E. Bradford, and many others.

The cultural elites governing America today have embraced the very intellectual and spiritual pathologies against which the Southern tradition has consistently inveighed. It should not be surprising, therefore, that this tradition of resistance to modernity is largely unknown—even to Southern students. Young Southerners seeking an understanding of their own heritage in colleges and universities of the South are likely to find nothing. If their tradition is mentioned at all, it is usually demonized as a masked defense of racism.

The campaign to eradicate Southern memory has been successful. In less than 40 years, young Southerners have become strangers in the colleges and universities funded by their parents' tax dollars and by the generous gifts of Southern alumni. In supporting most institutions of higher learning in the South, Southerners are literally funding their own cultural destruction. It is, therefore, necessary to form alternative centers of learning which can provide undergraduate and graduate students of the South, black and white, with a scholarly understanding of what is noble in the Southern tradition and of how to extend that tradition into the future. The LS Institute was formed for this purpose, and it seeks to recover speculative insights not cultivated by the academy today. But it also seeks to recover and preserve the identity of an oppressed and demoralized people, and in this it shares a close affinity with the Irish hedge schools.

The Penal Laws imposed on the Irish people in 1695 were designed by English officials in London and Dublin to extirpate the native Celtic language and culture of Ireland. From the 1690's to the 1840's, the youth of Ireland received their education in little gatherings that sprang up throughout the country. They were taught in abandoned buildings, sod huts, and in the open air against the background of large thorn hedges (hence the name, "hedge schools"). The schools were illegal, and severe penalties were imposed on those who associated with them; still, they flourished for a century and a half, keeping alive the native language, literature, and religion as well as an Irish historical self-understanding. The national and cultural identity nourished in these schools asserted itself two centuries later in the formation of the independent Irish Republic.

A German traveler, Johann Kohl, made this observation in the early 1840's: "An Irish hedge school which I visited—one in the pure old national style—enabled me to observe the mode by which, in these remote parts of Ireland, the light of intellectual cultivation is transmitted. It was, in truth, a touching sight." A traveler in 1835 remarked on the high quality of education achieved by some of the hedge schools:

> I invited one of their number [a boy of twelve years] to read me a passage from the gospel of Saint Matthew. Evidently the child misunderstood me. He searched in his satchel until he found his tattered book, stood up, and proceeded to read me the account of Christ's passion in Greek.

The LS Institute organizes research and publication, holds conferences, and conducts summer schools on every aspect of the Southern tradition. But there are also what—following the Irish example—we call Hedge School Seminars, typically held all day on a Saturday or over a weekend. Participants are provided beforehand with a collection of readings: Jefferson's Kentucky Resolutions; the Calhoun-Webster debate; efforts by leading antebellum Southerners to abolish slavery gradually by judicial review as well as by legislation; the "black codes" of Northern and Western states; the suppressed story of black Confederates who saw the defense of their country as a step to civil equality; M.E. Bradford's essays on Lincoln; and selections from Southern literature, theology, and constitutional law. The seminars are funded and arranged at low cost by local sponsors. An Institute scholar leads a discussion of the readings and stays as a guest in the home of one of the participants. Hedge School Seminars have been held in church buildings, homes, the backrooms of a barbecue shack and of a supermarket, in a private school, in an empty office of a bank on Saturday, and even in the open air under a palmetto grove—anywhere that space permits.

Hedge School Seminars can be tailored to any group, from high-school students to graduate students to the millions of college-educated men and women, working and raising families, who reject the demonization of the South and of their tradition but have been rendered silent.

The reigning assumption of nearly all American historiography since 1865 has been the moral proposition that the Union should have been preserved at all costs—even at the expense of over a million-and-a-half men killed, missing, and wounded.

Until 1860, secession was widely regarded as a right available to an American state. Northern abolitionists had argued for 30 years that the *North* should secede from the Union as the best way of putting slavery on the road to extinction. They were right. Secession was the only rational and humane solution to the problems facing the federation: the difficulty of gradual emancipation posed by state laws that absolutely prohibited or severely restricted the entrance of free blacks into Western and Northern states; the brutal economic discrimination imposed on the South; and the growth of a continental empire that had swollen to ten times its size in only 50 years. To write history from the assumption that the peaceful dissolution of the Union was a good thing would bring to light an array of facts, moral possibilities, and spectacular moral losses that have been hidden from view. It also would open up political possibilities that today are closed off.

The United States is the last of the 19th-century nationalist empires (something the Constitution was designed to prevent). And with the collapse of the Soviet Union, it is the last empire still to be engaged in the hubristic 19th-century project of imposing its vision of a universalist civilization on the world. The guiding assumptions of American historiography (and of American self-identity) are still rooted in the 19th-century idea of a consolidated nationalist empire at the service of a global liberalism. One hundred and thirty-five years later, we are in a very different world, and a paradigm shift in American historiography is long overdue.

The civic-minded who are concerned about the politicization of higher education should consider diverting some of the funds they unthinkingly give to mainstream colleges and universities to an institute of their choice. It is only from the bonds of friendship, community, and learning formed in these small independent gatherings that cultural renewal is likely to arise. c

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"All the News Unfit to Print"

Signs of the Times

Vol. 2 No. 9 September 2000

The parking lot of a shopping mall in Biloxi, Mississippi, was packed with young blacks in town for an event called Black Spring Break. Suddenly, a shout went up from several male voices: "There's a white girl! There's a white girl!"

> Seconds later, the girl was under attack. The mob pressed in, hands clawed at her, and her top was ripped off. As she tried to cover up and buried her face in her hands, the crowd shouted, laughed, and jeered at her. Hands shot up in the air, some pumping fists triumphantly, others waving video cameras seeking to capture the girl's trauma for more laughs later on.

The sordid proceedings were captured by a photographer for the Biloxi *Sun-Herald*, which also reported the details above. Biloxi residents who did not appreciate the "party going" spirit wrote to the *Sun-Herald* about other girls of both races who had their clothes torn off; of girls followed into bathrooms by men with video cameras; of public stripping and sexual acts. A woman described a frantic call from her 19-year-old daughter stuck in traffic by "party goers":

> They were exposing themselves and videotaping her reaction to it. Groups of party-goers were having sex on the hoods of cars next to her . . . I asked if she could find a policeman to help her get off the highway. She said there were hundreds of policemen standing around watching.

Hateful slurs soon escalated into physical violence. Shopkeepers were robbed and threatened, and many temporarily closed their businesses. "The behavior was disgusting, obscene and deplorable," said Biloxi's insensitive Mayor A.J. Holloway. But the real problem with this unreported scandal—or with the riot in Los Angeles in the aftermath of the Lakers' June victory—is not so much the event itself but that we are not free to discuss it openly. Any attempt to do so invites the charge of "racism."

The cult of minority victimology crossed the Atlantic a long time ago, with Tony Blair's Britain leading the way: When Britain's own version of the "partying" at Biloxi takes place—once a year at Notting Hill carnival or every Saturday night in Brixton—the police are expected to act as social workers and therapists. But egregious "hate crimes" barely merit five lines of a Reuters dispatch (June 7) when the targets do not belong to a recognized category of victims:

> British tourism chiefs have apologized to a group of German teenagers on a school trip who say they were stoned and called Nazis by English children. The 44-strong school party from Berlin was visiting Marazion in the western English county of Cornwall when the alleged attack took place. Teacher Gabbi Muller was quoted as saying that the English children were encouraged by their parents to throw stones and water bombs.

One can only speculate what the media reaction would have been had those English children stoned and insulted a busload of visiting teenagers from southeast Washington, D.C. At least now we know that Germans do not belong on Britain's list of protected species. Being European, they are deemed fair game.

We return to the Biloxi *Sun-Herald* for our next story—also about race, but with a different message. On June 22, the paper carried a feature about black Confederate soldiers and their descendants who remain faithful to Dixie. The accompanying picture had a self-explanatory caption:

> Harry Hervey, wearing a Confederate kepi hat, and his brother, Anthony, dressed in Confederate gray, wave the Confederate battle flag at the Eight Flags display in Gulfport. The Herveys were marching with the flags in support of the Black Confederate Soldier Foundation. They want to bring attention to the fact that blacks fought for the Confederacy too.

Mr. Hervey's devotion to the flag began when he discovered that his great-great-uncle James Hervey fought for the Confederacy and was killed at Shiloh. Further research helped Mr. Hervey discover the records of 100,000 black Confederates who fought in the war.

> "I am marching for freedom," Hervey said. "The battle flag stands for freedom and states' rights. The U.S. flag is the flag of slavery. It flew over 100 years of slavery, and Native Americans were annihilated under that flag." . . . Hervey sees a correlation between the past and today's controversies over the flag. "We currently live under a psychological form of reconstruction," he said. "Whites are made to feel guilty for sins of their ancestors, and blacks are made to feel downtrodden. This keeps all of us from communicating. The political correctness of today is killing the pride of the people."

British political satirist Auberon Waugh agrees. Writing in London's *Daily Telegraph* (June 14) on legislation to ban fox hunting, he commented that it may not be enough to limit the power of the House of Commons in order to discourage "its dreadful new members" from passing oppressive laws on matters they know nothing about. He argues that there is a link between banning fox hunts and bombing

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the Serbs:

> Mr. Blair's worst crime to date has been his cruel and pointless decision to wage war against the Serbs, but the blame for this must also attach to the Government and the whole House of Commons, which encouraged him to try [and now says] that the bombing had been illegal, but chose to congratulate itself on "moral grounds." In fact Blair's unilateral intervention was not only illegal. Its hopelessness also made it immoral.

Of all the crimes that government can commit, Waugh believes, "one of the worst is to involve itself in an unnecessary and unwinnable war, especially where there is no national interest involved." What will these people decide to do next, he asks:

> To abolish the House of Commons, on the grounds that our political classes are no longer up to the job, would be one solution, but I think the best plan would be to give them another chance. The present members should certainly be rounded up and prosecuted for involving us in their disgraceful Balkans war. When they are all safely in prison, we might hold another general election, having shown the wretched candidates what is likely to happen to them if they try to meddle with our most ancient country sport.

Back in the United States, Kosovo continues to be the victim of the mainstream media's collective amnesia. The *Boston Globe*—once supportive of Clinton's "humanitarian intervention"—was one of the few large papers to look back at the bombing campaign on the first anniversary of its ending (June 20):

> [W]hat does it reveal about this nation if we can engage in such massive violence and then forget about it without follow-up efforts to measure what was actually done against what was said? Did Operation Allied Force achieve its goals? Was it moral? Or even practical? In this political season, has anyone asked Al Gore or George W. Bush what they learned from the NATO air war? Or whether they would embark on such a course again? And what of us citizens? What do we say now about the mayhem of which we were sponsors?

Such questions are especially pertinent in light of a damning report issued by Amnesty International, charging NATO with having committed war crimes:

> [A] campaign of ethnic cleansing has continued in Kosovo unabated since last June with nary a hint of humanitarian protest—only now it is Serbs being cleansed by Kosovar Albanians, whose vengeful hatred was exacerbated by the war . . . the NATO air war, having criminally killed civilians, having elevated the protection of warriors above that of children, having preferred violence over authentic diplomacy, having enabled ethnic cleansing instead of halting it, having strengthened Milosevic rather than toppling him, having alienated Russia at the worst time, having through all of this dulled the conscience of the West—the NATO war was even more unjust than its fiercest critics thought.

The fallout of that war will be with Europe for years to come. Milan's *Corriere della sera* carried a typical story on June 8 about the dramatic rescue, by Italian police special forces, of a 15-year-old girl who had been kidnapped by an Albanian gang and was being held for ransom in Turin. Such items are hardly news in Italy, Spain, Britain, or Greece, but they somehow don't make it into the press of the land of the free. The same applies in cases which evoke Salman Rushdie's *cause célèbre*—especially if they make a Middle Eastern client state look bad (Reuters, June 18):

> An Egyptian writer on trial for atheism and blasphemy against Islam rooted his defence in the right to free speech. "I have an opinion and I expressed my opinion in these books," Salaheddin Mohsen, in detention since April, told a state security court. . . . Prosecutors put him on trial after he admitted . . . this year that he did not believe in Islam . . . Mohsen is charged with "using religion to promote, by writing, extremist ideas to denigrate the Islamic religion, provoke strife and damage national unity." The trial is the first of its kind since Egypt's top appeals court pronounced Cairo University professor Nasr Abu Zeid an apostate on the basis of his writings in 1996 and forcibly divorced him from his Moslem wife.

Some of "secular" Egypt's neighbors are busy with less lofty pursuits. The *Independent* of London (June 23) reports that money laundering has reached colossal proportions in Israel, "securing its status as one of the world's leading money laundries." The paper states that gangsters from Russia take advantage of money-transfer laws aimed at attracting Jewish people to the country:

> The businessman Gregory Lerner notoriously admitted defrauding Russian banks of $48 [million], which he used to try to open a bank in Israel. He was fined $5 [million] not for bringing in stolen money but for local bribery and fraud. Banking or spending the profits of illicit offshore enterprises has not been illegal in Israel, although moves are afoot to change this. For this reason, Israel has been considered a launderer's paradise. Established as a safe-haven for the Jews, the country has not asked many questions about their riches.

Eat your heart out, Switzerland: "not asking too many questions" has cost you dearly. Perhaps one day, the Russian government will sue Israeli banks for the many billions stolen from their rightful owners—and invoke the recent Swiss precedent.

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An Empire, If You Can Bear It

by Justin Raimondo

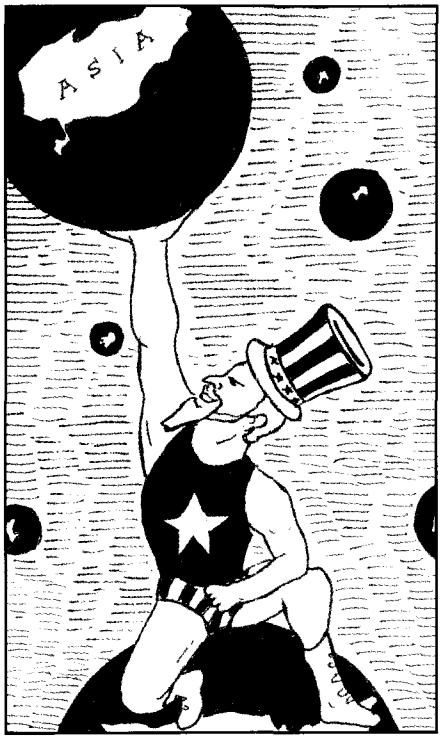
"The mission of the United States is one of benevolent assimilation."
—William McKinley

Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire
by Chalmers Johnson
New York: Metropolitan Books;
268 pp., $26.00

◆

In his classic study of "isolationism," *Not to the Swift*, Justus Doenecke takes note of a phenomenon called "Asia Firstism"—the view of conservative politicians and publicists of the postwar era who opposed meddling in Europe but saw Asia as the equivalent of the long-vanished American frontier and the East as the natural sphere of American expansionism. In the postwar world, the old America Firsters "concentrated less and less upon withdrawal from the world's passions and battles, and more and more upon the most hazardous commitments on the Asian continent." Today, a new crop of Asia Firsters opposes U.S. intervention in the Balkans but considers the military occupation of Japan, South Korea, and Okinawa as vital to American interests. Vladimir Putin is a pussycat, but the "Chicoms," in these circles, are a rising challenge to American hegemony that must be "contained."

In the 1950's, as the Cold War delivered the conservative movement to the tender mercies of various ex-communist and pseudo-Trotskyist charlatans, a tiny minority retained the old faith. Doenecke recounts that, even at the height of the Cold War hysteria, "genuine outsiders" like Lawrence Dennis, Harry Elmer Barnes, Garet Garrett, and precious few others "called in vain for a return to a more consistent and cautious ideology." Garrett, wondered aloud: "How could we lose China or Europe, since they never belonged to us?" The question was drowned out by the strident Cold War chorus and was not to be asked again for half a century. Now that the Cold War is over, Chalmers Johnson has raised this question with renewed urgency in a book that is the perfect antidote for present-day Asia Firstism.



Bill Sholik

In 1952, Garrett opined that, by the time we discover our republic has become an empire, "it may be already too late to do anything about it. That is to say, a time comes when Empire finds itself a prisoner of history." There is the same sense of irony and self-inflicted tragedy in Johnson's indictment of American globalism. "Many may, as a start, find it hard to believe that our place in the world even adds up to an empire," he writes:

> But only when we come to see our country as both profiting from and trapped within the structures of an empire of its own making will it be possible for us to explain a great many elements of the world that otherwise perplex us.

Johnson, president of the Japan Policy Research Institute, begins by considering the ugly spectacle of imperial America in Okinawa, painting a vivid portrait of the island as an exploited outpost of empire, where rape, robbery, and traffic accidents involving U.S. military personnel surpass the crime rates of our own inner cities. Chapters on Indonesia, the two Koreas, China, and Japan reinforce the overarching theme of "blowback," succinctly summed up in the biblical injunction that "as ye sow so ye shall reap." "Blowback" refers both to terrorist attacks on U.S. military bases and other targets abroad and to the (not so) long-range economic and political consequences of imperial overstretch. In this ambitious book, Johnson presents the outlines of a non-Marxist theory of American imperialism: "Marx and Lenin were mistaken about the nature of imperialism," he says:

> It is not the contradictions of capitalism that lead to imperialism but imperialism that breeds some of the more important contradictions of capitalism. When these contradictions ripen, as they must, they create devastating economic crises.

In fact, the Cold War distorted the global economy and hollowed out America's industrial base, leading to bad investments in our East Asian satellites and

Justin Raimondo writes from San Francisco.

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their subsequent overcapacity. Japan is a case in point. During the Cold War, the country's strategic value outweighed—in the eyes of U.S. political leaders and economic planners—its growing role as an economic competitor. Americans provided open access to their markets without demanding reciprocity, while the Japanese supinely accepted their role as a eunuch state, disarmed but kept fat and happy by their American overlords. As a "developmental state," along with the other Asian "tigers," Japan created its own variety of mercantilist capitalism, a "third way" between the socialism of the Soviet bloc and "laissez-faire," American style. This Nipponese third way, however, was not an ideological alternative, but the survival mechanism of a defeated people. Japanese industrial policy, guided by a permanent and unelected bureaucracy, was geared to serve the interests of producers, not consumers. Giant cartels, or *zaibatsu*, stood at the apex of an export-driven economy, churning out inexpensive manufactured goods for the U.S. market while making their own people pay ten times the world market price for their primary food staple, rice. Other Asian states, huddled under the U.S. defense umbrella, followed the Japanese example. Imperialism distorted the normal development of these nations and made them economically dependent on their political and—especially—their military relationship with the United States.

This peculiar form of imperial symbiosis had a debilitating effect on both America and Japan: It led to the de-industrialization of America as well as a great deal of Japanese malinvestment. In America, the deterioration of the steel, auto, and other heavy industries created the Rust Belt, slashing the ranks of working-class families; in Japan, MITI economic planners manipulated the controls of their industrial-policy machine, reducing interest rates to zero percent, and creating an economic bubble that burst in 1998, when Japan plunged into recession. MITI's economic planners, rather than undertake needed reforms—which would have meant the wholesale restructuring of the Japanese economy—fell back on what they knew: They would export their way out of their predicament. Resisting pressures to open their markets to American goods, the Japanese continued to develop the fine art of economic warfare behind a wall of protective tariffs, taxes, and other barriers to trade. In negotiations with the U.S. government, the Japanese held the trump card: Did the Americans want the suddenly impoverished Japanese holders of U.S. government securities to convert their assets into cash? This would be perhaps the most destabilizing form of blowback possible: the bursting of the American bubble and the beginning of a worldwide economic meltdown.

Here is the true meaning of globalization: The United States is being held hostage by its own satellites, a prisoner of history as well as of the hubris of its leaders. Johnson's powerful thesis is that we are bound to buckle under the burden of empire; it is only a matter of time before the American Empire goes the way of its Roman, British, and Soviet predecessors.

From Johnson's perspective, the case of South Korea is especially illuminating—and newsworthy, as we witness the rise of a new Korean nationalism and the momentum of reunification threatening to erase borders, political structures, and interstate alliances born at the height of the Cold War. Johnson compares the Kwangju uprising of 1980 to the suppression of the Hungarian revolution of 1956, the difference being that the Soviets used their own troops while we depended on our South Korean surrogates. When a South Korean general in 1980 headed off democratic elections with a coup and imposed martial law, student protesters in Kwangju were bayoneted by elite South Korean military forces who had been withdrawn from the DMZ with more than tacit U.S. consent. Johnson, quoting recently released cables to and from the American ambassador to South Korea, William J. Gleysteen, shows that the United States coordinated the bloody suppression of the Kwangju rebellion as surely as the Kremlin planted its jackboot on the neck of Imre Nagy and the Hungarian revolutionaries. During the Cold War, South Korea had no more choice to opt out of its military alliance with the United States than the nations of the Warsaw Pact were free to leave the Soviet bloc.

The inability to escape the "protection" of American hegemony is even more pronounced in the post-Cold War era, when there is nothing to protect South Korea against except the accelerating implosion of North Korea's communist regime. As South Korean President Kim Dae Jung holds up the promise of reunification as an achievable goal, the lords of the New World Order are getting nervous. In April 1997, Secretary of Defense William Cohen declared in a visit to Seoul that American troops would remain stationed on the peninsula even if North and South Korea were reunified—a statement that was met at the time with widespread shock, not only by the Chinese but by the South Koreans, who increasingly view the GIs in their midst as more of a threat than North Korea's million-man army.

Johnson's account of the origins and development of South Korea as a U.S. client state emphasizes the underlying current of Korean nationalism that is just now breaking through to the surface. Gen. Park Chung-hee's *coup d'etat* of 1961 ushered in a decade of what appeared to be coordination between Washington and Seoul. General Park, however, had observed the fate of America's South Vietnamese client, and he was aware that South Korea needed to go it alone by acquiring nuclear weapons. South Korea launched a nuclear-weapons program that was supposed to bear radioactive fruit in 1985—but Park was assassinated before the project got off the ground. (It was, of course, a coincidence that his assassin was South Korea's chief of intelligence, Kim Jae-kyu, who just happened to be Park's main liaison with Washington. The two were having dinner, and sometime between the appetizers and the drinks Kim pulled out a pistol, shot Park in the head, and wounded a bodyguard. The official story is that he did it to protest "repression against the people"—a repression implemented by the commander of Park's political police, the assassin himself.)

The same military and political establishment that insists on maintaining indefinitely our Cold War "forward" stance on the Korean peninsula as a permanent obstacle to Korean reunification also sees China as an emerging threat to American hegemony that must be either "engaged" or "contained"—never adjusted to. The irony, Johnson points out, is that a united Korea could provide a regional counterbalance to this alleged Chinese threat. The author's assessment of China reflects his view of Asia's developing capitalist countries—Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore, and even Japan—as "soft" authoritarian states which, while nominally democratic, are actually governed with varying degrees of popular participation and consent by unelected bureaucrats.

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China, where the media is openly controlled by the state, is an example of "soft totalitarianism"; Johnson contrasts the Chinese system with the Japanese model of speech control, where

> such freedoms exist on paper but are attenuated in part by cartelization of the news media—press clubs in Japan can impose collective or individual penalties on journalists who report news that irritates the state.

Elections are formally held under both systems, with China's soft totalitarians using police methods to ensure the outcome and Japan's soft authoritarian regime achieving its ends "through peer pressure, bullying, fear of ostracism, giving priority to group norms, and eliciting conformity through social sanctions of various kinds."

Under both types of government, elections are mere formalities; economic reforms in China have further blurred the differences between the "socialist" and "capitalist" wings of developing Asia. Beneath the thin veneer of ideology, the underlying character of the various national cultures shapes the social and political evolution of the Asian tigers, and also of that giant mastodon, China. Johnson argues that "the real economic model for mainland China, although never mentioned for all the obvious reasons, is undoubtedly neither Japan nor South Korea but Taiwan" under the Nationalists, where thriving state-party enterprises generate half the nation's wealth. Left to themselves, Johnson suggests, China and Taiwan could achieve a peaceful conclusion to their family feud—a possibility that once seemed more likely than the prospect of Korean reunification.

The Cold War ended, but the Americans did not go home; instead, they stayed to guard the frontiers of empire against an enemy that has long since vanished. More than that, they launched a new holy war—actually, a series of "humanitarian" interventions in tandem with an ideological campaign to impose "free market democracy" on the rest of the world.

With American hegemony in the military realm assured, and the public largely unaware of its government's machinations,

> government officials, economic theorists, and members of the Wall Street-Treasury Complex launched an astonishingly ambitious, even megalomaniacal attempt to make the rest of the world adopt American economic institutions and norms. One could argue that the project reflected the last great expression of eighteenth-century Enlightenment rationalism, as idealistic and utopian as the paradise of pure communism that Marx envisioned.

This megalomania is reflected in what Srdja Trifkovic has called the Clinton Doctrine, which commits the United States to the global eradication of "racism" and "ethnic intolerance," even if it means invading every country on earth to do so—militarily, as in Kosovo, but also by launching coordinated economic attacks on the currencies of targeted nations, such as Indonesia, Thailand, and Malaysia. "Although there is no evidence that Washington hatched a conspiracy to extend the scope of its global hegemony," writes Johnson, "a sense of moral superiority on the part of some and of opportunism on the part of others more than sufficed to create a similar effect."

Not all of Johnson's policy prescriptions are sound—"managed trade" is what we have *now*—but it is hard to take issue with his analysis of militarized state capitalism as the logical outcome of an imperialistic foreign policy. His critique of Western capitalism as no less cartelized than the *zaibatsu* of Japan is sharp at times, as when Johnson notes disdainfully the "crony capitalism" that enabled the government bailout of Long-Term Capital Management, a huge hedge fund headed by former Federal Reserve Vice Chairman David W. Mullins. As the International Monetary Fund goes on the rampage in the Far East, destroying national economies and turning crises into catastrophes, Johnson acerbically notes that "globalization seems to boil down to the spread of poverty to every country except the United States."

While there is much talk these days of "rogue states" and what to do about them, the real problem, as Johnson shows, is that the world is currently afflicted by a "rogue superpower"—the United States of America. Lecturing, threatening, and overtly seeking to overthrow any regime that fails to bow before American hegemony, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright travels the world braying about the virtues of "democracy" and "free markets." In February 1998, explaining why it was necessary to launch cruise missiles against Iraq, she went into one of her trademark tirades. "If we have to use force, it is because we are America," she bawled. "We are the indispensable nation. We stand tall. We see farther into the future."

In reality, Albright & Company see no further than the next election, the next indictment, or the next big campaign contribution from a major weapons contractor. Like such Old Right critics of the warfare state as John T. Flynn, Johnson regards the arms lobby and an ever-growing military establishment as "the indispensable instrument for maintaining the American empire." We have won a post-Cold War arms race with "no other participants" for the purpose of appeasing the voracious appetite of an American military machine that has become autonomous: an imperial Praetorian Guard armed with thermonuclear weapons and awaiting its Caesar.

The consequences of the Cold War, Johnson predicts, will linger well into the 21st century, the history of which will amount in large part to blowback from the 20th. Only an awareness among American citizens of the crisis of empire can hope to avert or at least ameliorate it. Our leaders believe that,

> if so much as one overseas American base is closed or one small country is allowed to manage its own economy, the world will collapse. . . . [T]hey might better ponder the creativity and growth that would be unleashed if only the United States would relax its suffocating embrace.

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Facilis Discensus Averno

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

From Dawn to Decadence: 500 Years of Western Cultural Life, From 1500 to the Present
by Jacques Barzun
New York: HarperCollins;
877 pp., $36.00

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Jacques Barzun's 30-somethingth book, though published by HarperCollins, bears the unmistakable stamp of Columbia University, from whose college the author graduated, where he was appointed Seth Low Professor of History, and served for ten years as dean of faculties and provost. I refer, of course, to the college's once renowned, now démodé, Western Civilization program: a four-semester course of lectures and readings, mostly from a hefty two-volume work published by Columbia University Press, required of all candidates for the Bachelor of Arts degree. As a graduate of Columbia College, I consider myself the beneficiary, as well as the survivor, of a curriculum that gave the student the illusion (at least) of having Read All the Books, while making up in some part for the generally disappointing level of undergraduate instruction that prevailed in the college. (In fact, the reading lists for *all* courses at Columbia were comprehensively superb—a boon for a student temperamentally impatient, then as now, at being lectured at; who admires the sound of the human voice in the opera house rather than in the lecture hall and is incapable of concentrating on intellectual communication whose medium is something other than the PRINTED word.) Next after Western Civ, perhaps, Columbia is famous for its School of Journalism, the first institution of its kind. While I came to the journalistic profession (the phrase is obviously an oxymoron) by another route, I have not been immune subsequently to its primary occupational hazard: the philistinism that substitutes the Somali peacekeeping operation for the Peloponnesian War; the Republic of Haiti for the Republic of Venice; Martin Luther King, Jr., for Martin Luther; William Safire for Dr. Johnson; Bill Clinton for Muhammad, Don Juan, and the Marquis de Sade. Professor Barzun's book, with its essentially pedagogical approach to its subject, its textbook layout and highlighted quotations, took me back a few years to a formative and somewhat more humble period in my intellectual career, and yet I cannot say I resented the experience; rather, I welcomed and enjoyed it. If every working journalist read *From Dawn to Decadence* this year, the result might (just perhaps) amount to a small Enlightenment, however ephemeral, on the American Grub Street. The young (practitioners in their 20's and 30's) could finally learn something about the dead elephant they've been so courageously kicking since leaving school, while their elders, aged in the 40's, 50's, and 60's—the last generation of Americans who can fairly be said to have had an education—would experience a refresher course, the more enjoyable for not requiring an examination at the end of it. Reading Barzun's book, I felt myself a living example of the truth of Dr. Johnson's dictum that men more often need to be reminded than instructed.

In Jacques Barzun's conception, the past five centuries of Western civilization that constitute the modern era are divided into four great revolutionary movements—the religious, the monarchical, the liberal-philosophical, and the social—whose impress affects the present powerfully and all of which conduce to a single end, which is decadence. Barzun is quick to remind the reader that the word indicates a falling off, not stoppage or total ruin:

> It implies in those who live in such a time no loss of energy or talent or moral sense. On the contrary it is a very active time, full of deep concerns, but peculiarly restless, for it sees no clear lines of advance. The loss it faces is that of Possibility. The forms of art as of life seem exhausted, the stages of development have been run through. Institutions function painfully. Repetition and frustration are the intolerable result. . . . [T]he upshot is a floating hostility to things as they are.

Almost in the same breath, however, he speaks of demise, which he argues to be the result of the West's pressing its most characteristic purposes to their utmost conclusions. ("This ending is shown by the deadlocks of our time: for and against nationalism, for and against individualism, for and against the high arts, for and against strict morals and religious belief.") These purposes, which Barzun perceives as the overriding cultural themes suggested by "continuity in aims" over half a millennium, are accorded similar status in his book, where they appear always in capital letters:

RECEIVED WISDOM

2006: The Chautauqua Rising by Jack Cashill (Dunkirk, NY: Olin Frederick, Inc.; 273 pages, $22.95)

I picked up Jack Cashill's political suspense novel, *2006: The Chautauqua Rising*, because it is set in the grapy southwest of New York State. I didn't put it down until I had finished it, long after midnight.

Cashill's rebels rise from the western fringe of Upstate New York's Burned-Over District, where a century and a half ago ragged prophets and holy fools tramped the land preaching every sort of revolution. His "constitutionalist underground" dream team of Seneca Indians, Amish, hill people, Latin Mass Catholics, a sportswriter, and a beautiful folksinger match wits and muscle with the homicidal careerists who would seize their guns and shut down their homeschools. If this sounds drearily didactic, it isn't. The novel is fast-paced and genuinely suspenseful, and its conclusion is an utterly implausible hoot.

Tinted by local color, animated by righteous (and condign) outrage, *2006: The Chautauqua Rising* is a page-turner with its heart in the right place.

—*Bill Kauffman*

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EMANCIPATION, PRIMITIVISM, INDIVIDUALISM, SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS, ABSTRACTION, ANALYSIS, SPECIALISM, SCIENTISM, SECULARISM, REDUCTIONISM.

Having been a wallflower all my life at dances and of the male persuasion into the bargain, I can only imagine that the experience of reading this book might be comparable to dancing with a partner who fails to exert what used to be called a sufficiently strong lead. While Barzun leans heavily on the reader in making a compelling case for sectarian factionalism, post-Reformation, as the proximate cause of the rise of the nation-state ruled by a monarch in the interest of imposing social and political stability (in retrospect, the locus of power since the late Middle Ages appears to have passed from the Holy Roman Empire to the warring 16th-century sects, thence to modern nations, and finally to a free-floating internationalist elite), for the most part he relies on catalog, anecdote, textbook generalities, and encapsulated biography to develop a thesis that lacks assertiveness, strong development, and bold delineation, for which upper-case nudges are substituted to indicate the pertinent theme (EMANCIPATION, ABSTRACTION). The principle of selection is careful enough, the material sufficiently well chosen, that much—indeed most—of Barzun's story is interesting, at times even entertaining, though not exactly original. Moreover, Barzun, as he enters the century of his own personal experience (he was born in France in 1907), exerts a stronger (and markedly more astringent) point of view. Outlines are sketched more starkly, colors are laid on more vividly: "The blow that hurled the modern world on its course of self-destruction was the Great War of 1914-18." (That is true, though—again—in no way a remarkable insight. By comparison, here is Professor Barzun's most insightful comment on the circumstances giving rise to that war: "It was late in the day to hope for the fusion [in the Balkans] that the full-fledged nations had achieved when the occidental monarchs made their revolution.")

In the public mind, Jacques Barzun remains the embodiment of the old ideal of the gentleman-and-scholar, America's foremost—almost its last—patrician intellectual; fairly or unfairly, he gained a reputation in the wake of the Columbia riots of 1969 as a reactionary defender of the Old Idea of the university, and of Western culture itself. For that reason it is hardly surprising to find him reacting with feeling against "artists" whose avowed aim is "[h]elping to destroy a culture," and to their message that "art as an institution with a moral purpose [is] dead." What *is* surprising is to stumble on such contradictions—frequent enough throughout the text to come finally as no surprise—of Professor Barzun's reputation as his extremely uncritical assessment of Tolstoy (a selfish monster in his personal life and by no means always a conscientious artist) and, even more, of George Bernard Shaw—who praised Stalin for his strength of mind and purpose in slaughtering tens of millions of his own people. (Since Shaw ridiculed Hitler and Mussolini, Barzun argues that his support for the Soviet dictator must be seen as an uncharacteristic act inconsistent with his true nature and opinions.)

Jacques Barzun, who in *From Dawn to Decadence* chose to work by way of what the French call *amoncellement* and juxtaposition, ought not to be faulted for failing to write a tendentious, ham-handed, pseudoscholarly book in the genre that is so popular today. On the other hand, a remark on almost the last page of the book that he *did* write caught my attention:

> The careful historian, before he ventures to predict the course of history, murmurs to himself, "*Schedel.*" It is not a magic word, but the name of a learned German who, in 1493—note the date—compiled and published the *Nüremburg Chronicle*. It announced that the sixth of the seven ages of mankind was drawing to a close, and it included several blank pages for recording anything of interest that might still occur during the following days. As we know, what occurred was the opening of the New World and all the innovations that followed from it—hardly a close.

This passage, rather than point me ahead to the futuristic vision with which Barzun concludes, instead sent me back to the beginning—not only of his book but of the modern era, the year 1500. Elsewhere Barzun refers to "the cultural lag of about ten years that had generally obtained between European and American art and intellect," and that the American expatriates of the 1920's are said to have succeeded in closing. It was this notion of Europe informing and forming the New World—especially the part of it known as the United States—that stirred an idea I have found myself toying with for some years. It is that the New World—created significantly by Old World adventurers, dissenters and heretics, the restless, the dispossessed, and the disaffected—in the process of creating itself succeeded in recreating (perhaps deconstructing is the better word) the Old one. There seems no doubt this did occur, at least in some degree: The question is simply how early the process began—the early 1500's or the 1950's, or somewhere in between. My guess is that—in non- or extra-intellectual ways to begin with; simply by force of new examples and the self-con-

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scious program (again, particularly in what became the United States) to begin the human experiment over again, to create not just a new world but a new man, a new universe, and a new metaphysic to go with them—the Americas, almost from the time of first settlement, influenced the old Western world more than it influenced them, no matter that Descartes lived in France and John Locke in England. (Here I am thinking not, for instance, of the concept of the Noble Savage, which after all was a production of the European mind, not that of American colonials besieged by savages, but something far more profound, or anyway ineffable.) The agenda of the New World, concerned as these were with discovering wealth or freedom of every sort almost beyond the European imagination, have all been part of an attempt to escape the condition of being human—an urge never characteristic of the older culture of the West, which aimed firstly at salvation, secondly at a worldly catholicity of experience, intellectual and otherwise, that made it what Barzun terms a mongrel civilization *par excellence*. Perhaps the clearest, or at least the most dramatic, way to conceive of the relation is in dialectical terms: the Old World Thesis confronted by its offspring, the New World Antithesis, whose reconciliation is the Synthesis—identified here as Decadence.

This is the unwritten history that Barzun's most enjoyable consideration of the modern era brought up to me. It is also the history of the half-millennium 1500-2000 that *I* would write, if only I had one-tenth the learning, the courage, and the stamina that Jacques Barzun, *aetat.* 93, still enjoys.

Chilton Williamson, Jr., is the senior editor for books at Chronicles.

Obscurely Called: Richard Wilbur at Eighty

by Alan Sullivan

Mayflies:
New Poems and Translations
by Richard Wilbur
New York: Harcourt Brace;
80 pp., $22.00

◆

Now nearly 80 years of age, Richard Wilbur has recently published *Mayflies*, a new book of poems and translations. This slim volume has attracted slight—and sometimes slighting—notice in most literary publications. America's poetry establishment does not quite know what to make of its former poet laureate. For half a century, this eminent translator of 17th- and 18th-century French plays has persisted in writing measured yet passionate religious verse in the manner of Donne or Herbert. From his first book of poems, *The Beautiful Changes*, published in 1947, Wilbur has chronicled the permutations of an often-challenged yet resilient faith. Consider this early sonnet, "Praise in Summer":

Obscurely yet most surely called to praise,
As summer sometimes calls us all, I said
The hills are heavens full of branching ways
Where star-nosed moles fly overhead the dead;
I said the trees are mines in air, I said
See how the sparrow burrows in the sky!
And then I wondered why this mad *instead*
Perverts our praise to uncreation, why
Such savors in this wrenching things awry.
Does sense so stale that it must needs derange
The world to know it? To a praiseful eye
Should it not be enough of fresh and strange
That trees grow green, and moles can course in clay,
And sparrows sweep the ceilings of our day?

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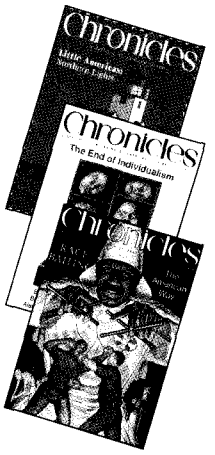

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With its deft rhymes and dazzling turns of phrase, "Praise in Summer" seems at first glance a confection of words as airy and elusive as the poems of Wallace Stevens, who had a substantial (and perhaps unfortunate) influence on Wilbur's youthful work. Readers of Wilbur's early books tended to regard him, in the words of the *Oxford Companion to American Literature*, as "classic, urbane, often witty, always intellectual." However, they always avoided the alarming word "Christian."

"Praise in Summer," though superficially pagan, hints at the Christian themes that would come to dominate Wilbur's later work. After the exuberance of his initial "I said," the poet questions the premises of his own wordplay, and he implicitly criticizes fantastical poetry for perverting sense while pursuing sensation. Wilbur wisely perceives that such overreliance on novelty must, in the end, blight the commonplace upon which novelty depends for contrast. He anticipates, with "uncreation," all the nihilism of late-20th-century art.

Throughout his career, Wilbur has returned to the perplexity that undergirds "Praise in Summer." Sometimes he has couched it in riddling language. "Shall I love God for causing me to be?" (*Walking to Sleep*, "The Proof"). Or he has placed his questions in the mouth of a surrogate. "Is there some huge attention, do you think, which suffers us and is inviolate?" (*The Mind-Reader*, title poem). Such inquiries abound in Wilbur's Pulitzer Prize-winning *New and Collected Poems* (1988). Perhaps they discomfit readers, since the volume finds little shelf space in comparison with the New Age ravings of Allen Ginsberg or the complaints of Adrienne Rich.

The poems that make up *Mayflies* have taken another decade to accumulate. Their sparsity intensifies them, like flowers in a xeric Alpine landscape. Late in life, Wilbur has largely abandoned the rhetorical question as a poetic device. Reflecting on the pleasures and losses of eight decades, he speaks more plainly, less obscurely; yet the authorial habits of a lifetime remain, and he achieves many of his aims by indirection. Sometimes he dons personae, as in this short poem, entitled "Once":

> The old rock-climber cries out in
> his sleep,
> Dreaming without enthusiasm
> Of a great cliff immeasurably steep,
> Or of the sort of yawning chasm,
> Now far too deep,
> That once, made safe by rashness,
> he could leap.

Here, Wilbur the moralist chides Wilbur the daredevil grammarian, who is caught once more by the illusory challenge of his own convoluted conceit. "The Gambler" and "Bonds" are other cautionary character sketches which may contain elements of self-admonition. Several of the translations also afford Wilbur opportunities to examine himself from odd vantages, although the particular poems were suggested to him by friends who knew his inclinations, rather than by any deliberate rummages through the work of foreign poets.

Wilbur also toys with riddles and transformations. At one extreme, his playfulness has given rise to whole books of children's verse such as *The Disappearing Alphabet*. At the other, it animates the translations from Dante's *Inferno* and Molière's *Amphytrion*, which close the new collection of poetry. Midway between these extremes, we find "Crow's Nests," a play on literal and figurative senses of the title phrase, in which trees are seen as the masts of galleons. Wilbur has taken a lifelong interest in the way human senses construct the perceived world (the principal topic of "A Digression") and in all manner of transmutations that trick the mind.

Though very much a moralist and metaphysician-*manqué*, Wilbur never strays from the particular and phenomenal. He does not lapse into mere philosophizing, the way Stevens did in his later work. In larger poems such as "Icons" and "Fabrications," Wilbur contemplates artifice, artifact, and artificer; yet he eschews abstract language when he addresses these potentially numbing subjects. Instead, he communicates through startling juxtapositions of imagery. Consider the final stanzas of "Fabrications":

> Witness this ancient map
> Where so much blank and name-
> lessness surround
> A little mushroom-clump of coastal
> towers
> In which we may infer civility,
>
> A harbor-full of spray,
> And all those loves which hint of
> love itself,
> Imagining too a pillar at whose top
> A spider's web upholds the archi-
> trave.

The astounding conclusion refers back to a spider web at the poem's start, but it extends the metaphor to cathedral scale, depicting the universe as Creation, bound in an unseen silk of causality and intent. This trick of aligning microcosm and macrocosm, human and divine, is a favorite device by which Wilbur attempts to lift himself and his readers toward a transcendent consciousness. Though it is not spoken directly, and though Wilbur does not capitalize the phrase "love itself," we can certainly infer, behind the "civility" of the poem and its calculated form, a kind of prayer.

A keen observer of plants, mites, midges, and stars, Wilbur is a descriptive poet *nonpareil*; yet he never idealizes the natural world. Instead, he unites poignancy with asperity, a rare combination in our sentimental culture. In the opening poem of *Mayflies*, "A Barred Owl," he gazes unflinchingly at creature cruelty while reassuring a child against a night terror. One use of words is to "domesticate a fear." This is certainly part of the poet's calling; for many believers, it may also be the primary purpose of religion. But wonder outweighs fear in Wilbur's universe, and his poems are most profound when most awestruck. In the title poem of *Mayflies*, Wilbur defines more distinctly that obscure call he heard so long ago. He answers the rhetorical questions he posed as a young man, as he sets a final challenge for his old age.

We can only hope that Wilbur is granted another decade, and another book as fine as *Mayflies*. Whether or not he enjoys such good fortune, he has fulfilled his promise as our foremost religious poet by offering a polite but firm rebuke to the intellectual vices of our time:

> In somber forest, when the sun was
> low,
> I saw from unseen pools a mist of
> flies
> In their quadrillions rise
> And animate a ragged patch of
> glow
> With sudden glittering—as when a
> crowd
> Of stars appear
> Through a brief gap in black and
> driven cloud,
> One arc of their great round-dance
> showing clear.
> It was no muddled swarm I wit-
> nessed, for

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In *entrechats* each fluttering insect
there
Rose two steep yards in air,
Then slowly floated down to climb
once more,
So that they all composed a mani-
fold
And figured scene,
And seemed the weavers of some
cloth of gold,
Or the fine pistons of some bright
machine.

Watching these lifelong dancers of
a day
As night closed in, I felt myself
alone
In a life too much my own,
More mortal in my separateness
than they—
Unless, I thought, I had been
called to be
Not fly or star
But one whose task is joyfully to see
How fair the fiats of the caller are.

Alan Sullivan is a poet and critic from North Dakota.

Doe Fever

by Karina Rollins

The Case Against Hillary Clinton
by Peggy Noonan
New York: Regan Books/HarperCollins; 181 pp., $24.00

◆

The Case Against Hillary Clinton is a strange book. It would be less strange if it were titled *Peggy Noonan's Psychoanalyses, Future Speculations, and General Meanderings, Which Are All Well-Written and Witty*. But a book billed as an indictment of the First Lady, written by none other than Ronald Reagan's most lauded speechwriter, creates certain expectations.

One expectation is that conservatives, right-wingers, and anyone else who already dislikes and distrusts Hillary Clinton and her agenda will naturally whoop and cheer as they turn the pages. Another expectation is that Noonan would at least try to present the charges against Mrs. Clinton in such a way as to keep Hillary sympathizers from dismissing her as just another Clinton hater before she even presents her case.

But Noonan starts off with an imaginary scene set in the future, with Hillary about to give her acceptance speech after winning the New York Senate race against Mayor Rudy Giuliani (update that to Rick Lazio). Noonan describes the First Lady's manner of dress, the roaring crowds, and Hillary's thoughts—a multifaceted barrage of "Hah, I showed them!" attitude and utter self-indulgence. It seems real. You can just picture it. You just *know* the First Lady's thoughts would indeed be as puny as the ones so well described by Noonan—*if* you already are a Hillary foe. But for anyone on the undecided list, there is no reason to view this very funny concoction as anything more than entertainment *à la Saturday Night Live*—nor to take any of Noonan's subsequent criticisms seriously. If Noonan hoped to do more than preach to the choir, she blew it in her preface. (One suspects she is a bit too enamored of her own talent and wit to resist showing off before making an actual case.)

This ingenuity provides the high point of the book, a fictional 15-page address by Mrs. Clinton to Steven Spielberg, Jeffrey Katzenberg, Ted Turner, *et al.*, the who's who of the entertainment industry. Her speech is about the cultural morass of death, sexual license, and deviance by which American children are surrounded. It is so all-consuming that parents can't simply "change the channel if they don't like it" because another channel will have more of the same. This fictional Hillary has found a real voice and true guts. She presents the gathered Hollywood mighty with a chance to do the right thing for the sake of doing good: Make funny, quality entertainment that celebrates the goodness in people, not their dark sides; realize that just because First Amendment rights protect any expression, no matter how useless and vile, not all artistic expression *must* be useless and vile.

The speech dazzles with its cleverness. These 15 pages alone are worth the price of the book. It is Peggy Noonan at her best because it's a speech, and writing effective speeches is what Noonan does best. The speech brings to mind the woman who, after the Challenger explosion, quoted poetry to describe how the astronauts will "touch the face of God," giving President Reagan one of his greatest lines.

But the fact of the matter is that this wonderful speech is not a case against Hillary Clinton. It is about what Hillary could have said, and didn't; but while both Clintons could have used their positions to do good, the missed opportunity of persuading media moguls to stop producing smut isn't exactly a damning indictment. And not taking positive action is hardly a trait unique to the Clintons.

Other building blocks of the case against Hillary include dead-on projections of what her Senate race against Giuliani would have looked like (no smoking gun there); a seven-page speculation of what thoughts might pass through Hillary's mind during idle time on an airplane (including amusing but gratuitous insults of Al and Tipper Gore); and Noonan's 14-page plea to her childhood girlfriend not to vote for Mrs. Clinton. This is Noonan at her worst. Trying to expose the hollowness of Hillary's claims that she "shares the concerns" of New York housewives, Noonan veers off into class warfare, blasting Mrs. Clinton for a privileged lifestyle. The attack is so cheap that it could cause even card-carrying members of the "vast right-wing conspiracy" to feel the First Lady's pain.

The Case Against Hillary Clinton is as much about the President as it is about the First Lady, since, as Mr. Clinton has (in)famously said, "you get two for the price of one." Noonan gives a good account of the essence of the couple's "Clintonism"—their soulless power-grabbing, manifested in the countless scandals and "snafus" of their seven-year reign. "We can stop it here, in the battle of New York," she proclaims at the book's end.

> *You* will decide it. Either they will continue to deform and lower our national politics, or they will not. It is up to the people of New York. And that is the great thing about democracy: Before Hillary Clinton gets to decide your future, you get to decide hers.

This is good stuff; but it is too little, too late. During a recent TV interview with Judith Regan, Noonan proclaimed that she intended her book to "have the urgency of a pamphlet." It would have been more urgent had it *been* a pamphlet. The failure of Noonan's case against Hillary Clinton is not that she doesn't make it—she illustrates the myriad shady dealings and lies in which the

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First Lady has been so intimately involved—but that she almost completely negates a case so easily made well through her overdose of speculation, hearsay, and fantasy. It does not help that nearly half her sentences begin with "I believe," "I think," or "It seems."

Noonan's book ranges from fun to touching to weird. Serious, it is not. And it won't send even the mildest of Hillary sympathizers screaming in the opposite direction. What a shame; what a missed opportunity.

Karina Rollins writes from New York.

Rinse, Please

by Andrei Navrozov

Time: Its Origin, Its Enigma, Its History
by Alexander Waugh
New York: Carroll & Graf;
288 pp., $25.00

◆

As the book's title has all the lyric delicacy of a Rolex advertising campaign, and as we quickly discover that its author is neither a philosopher nor a watchmaker, it becomes clear at the outset that what we are up against is the most irritating of genres, popular science. In Mr. Waugh's defense, I hasten to add that, for us laymen, one of the most infuriating aspects of the did-you-know approach he plies here is that too often our answer is a grudging "No." The result is that the untutored reader, who has every right to consider himself the untutored writer's equal, finds himself learning things against his own better judgment. This is almost as humiliating as listening to your dentist talk about Baudelaire.

On the whole, it may be well worth the unpleasantness, however embarrassing it is, to hear Mr. Waugh (grandson of Evelyn, son of Auberon) pal around with his crimson-faced audience throughout what is undeniably an ill-composed, messy, and repetitive compendium of facts, conjectures, and ideas. Perhaps that is because this reviewer, in particular, has a weakness for Mr. Waugh's subject, and, seeing it twisted this way and that, as it is here, without any apparent purpose and in the absence of a cogent thesis, is easily and mightily pleased nonetheless. Perhaps if you really love Baudelaire you won't mind hearing about him between rinses.

The lesson of Mr. Waugh's untidy little book, for me at least, is this: Modern man, insofar as he is the avowed creature of scientific reason, inhabits a universe of numbers. The things he counts most assiduously are time and money. (Incidentally, I would not mind seeing a book that set out to relativize money even if it were written with the same coltish haphazardness with which Mr. Waugh tackles his subject in *Time*.) Of course, modern man's rationality is all make-believe, and by far the greater part of his reckoning is as much the product of a cultural convention as crossword puzzles, pickling recipes, or Renaissance painting.

Tell the train conductor who's checking your ticket to Naples that you've had a dream about your late grandfather, and he'll tell you that you ought to play 47 in the weekly lottery because 47 is the number of a dead man talking. Yet the New York broker who advises you to get into e-stocks because e-commerce is the way of the future is hardly more rational, in any meaningful sense of the word, than the Neapolitan fantasist. It's just that his vulgar tautology is couched in a more palatably modern way.

So it is with time. Its objectification, representation, and measurement is a cult activity of modern man, that deluded conformist who, instead of listening to church bells or observing the sunset, wears a personal wristwatch to proclaim his individualism. Like the impotent who gags at the idea of a love potion made from tiger guts and bat droppings but will happily take Viagra, modern man is discomfited at the suggestion that he ought to divide his life into the hours of *crepusculum* (of dusk), *vesperum* (of the evening star), *intempestum* (of the night), *galicinium* (of the crowing cock), and *diluculum* (of the dawn). He would hate to be reminded that the hour does not "have" 60 minutes in it, nor "are" there 60 seconds in a minute, but that these are mere social conveniences like proper spelling, acceptable table manners, or polite behavior at the theater. And he would be furious to hear that, while the earth does turn on its axis (however abstract this proposition) and goes around the sun (whatever *that* means), the cocksure confidence with which he—an irreligious and superstitious conformist, leading a vacuous yet rigidly regimented life—divides his days by 24 and his years by 365 is no more modern than the sense of collective security that fools have always found in all received wisdom. A good example of his fury, incidentally, are the popular riots that spread across Europe in the 1580's, and England in the early 1750's, at the introduction of the new Gregorian calendar, replacing the Julian calendar which had been in use since 45 B.C.

The list of such "relativizing" experiences is long and uncomfortable, culminating perhaps in Einstein's theory of space-time, which

> would allow for all times—past, present, and future—to coexist. That we can only see one plane in the time dimension, the present, is neither here nor there. When we look at a three-dimensional object—a cupboard, for instance—we cannot see all of its sides at once; nor would it be sensible to infer from our one angle of vision that the other sides of the cupboard do not exist. The same is the case for time.

This is almost a literal, word for word repetition of a memorable passage from a treatise on the philosophy of light in Russian icon painting written by Pavel Florensky in 1921, known as *The Iconostasis*. Before the introduction of perspective—itself a cultural convention rather like time—religious painting sought to represent its sacred subjects by means of light upon contiguous planes of time and space. And, of course, it is light that, according to Einstein, defines infinity.

In this sense, the lesson of Mr. Waugh's book (though not a wholly intended one, I fear) is that, in the 21st century, not to believe in God and Creation is not only unscientific, it is provincial. The university-educated, well-traveled, newspaper-reading modern man, the Wall Street *paterfamilias* and culture vulture, proud of his gold watch and convinced that he is nobody's fool because he can tell you the time, is less free, less cosmopolitan, and finally less rational than an illiterate peasant living in an obscure corner of medieval Europe.

At least the peasant had no delusions about what made him tick.

Andrei Navrozov is Chronicles' *European correspondent.*

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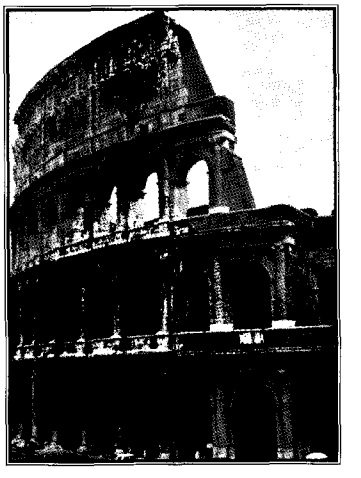

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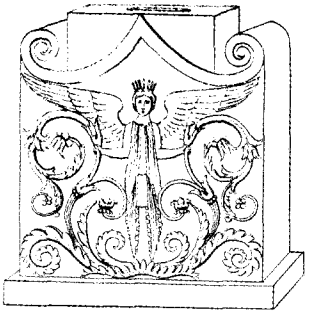

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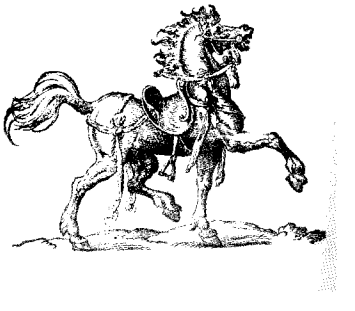

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by Samuel Francis

Processions of the Damned

"Well, fellow, who are you?" demands the Earl of Warwick of a character who appears on stage for the first time at the end of George Bernard Shaw's play *Saint Joan*. "I," huffs the man who has just burned Joan of Arc at the stake, "am not addressed as fellow, my lord. I am the Master Executioner of Rouen: It is a highly skilled mystery."

In the more civilized times of the late Middle Ages, the art and science of putting people to death was indeed a highly skilled mystery, much like the manufacture of stained glass or the embalming of mummies, and both rulers and ruled took pride in the craftsmen whose profession it was to mete out torture and death to convicted criminals. Contrary to Hollywood myth, executioners seldom wore hoods or masks, for the simple reason that no one saw anything wrong, shameful, or disreputable in how they made their living. Indeed, whole families spawned generations of professional executioners (the Sanson family of France was the best known). The only occasion that I know of on which an executioner wore a mask was at the judicial murder of King Charles I of England in 1649, and both the headsman who wielded the ax and the more brutal killers who engineered the king's decapitation had good reason to be both ashamed and afraid of what they were doing. But ordinarily, when real criminals and traitors mounted the scaffold, it occurred to no one to hide or try to minimize the supreme act of solemn justice that took place in a legal execution.

Today, however, executions are virtually state secrets, performed during the night at hidden locations deep within prison walls, witnessed only by a handful of journalists and other perverts who have enough clout with the governor to get a seat at the proceedings, and carried out not by men who take pride in what they do, but by nameless state troopers and prison guards forced to draw lots for the duty. Even these evasions aren't enough: Executions themselves are now disguised as medical operations, planned to be as painless and unfrightening as possible, lest the poor little murderers and rapists who have to get a jolt of hot juice might be intimidated at the last minute. Some years ago, when the state of Texas pioneered lethal injection as a method of capital punishment, lawmakers tried to force prison doctors to carry it out. The doctors, to their credit, simply refused, citing the Hippocratic oath that forbids them to take human life and insisting that the state acknowledge that executions are not just somewhat more elaborate tonsillectomies.

In the last few months, however, even the nearly bloodless executions we still carry out have come under attack: from the United Nations and its army of "human rights" watchers; from the Pope, who helped spring a convicted murderer in Missouri a few years ago; and from "conservatives"—namely, Pat Robertson, George Will, and William F. Buckley, Jr., as well as the moderate Republican governor of Illinois, who has suspended further executions in his state until he can be certain that their guests of honor are really guilty. Mr. Buckley's magazine, *National Review*, which still claims to be the major conservative journal of opinion in the country, ran a long article arguing against the death penalty in its June 19 issue. The article, by Carl M. Cannon, was subtitled "a conservative case against capital punishment," although there was nothing conservative about Mr. Cannon's argument. The same issue sported an editorial entitled "Thou shalt not fry," which, as *National Review* editorials in recent years have often done, failed to tell the readers what to think about the matter. "Advances in forensic techniques ensure that wrongful convictions will continue to be exposed," the editorial bleated. "This raises political, intellectual, and moral questions that conservatives must address."

The "advances in forensic techniques" are, in fact, the major causes of all the reconsiderations of the death penalty by people who have been and ought still to be in favor of it. The possibility of DNA testing now allows the police and the courts to determine whether some defendants or convicts are really the same individuals who left their hair, blood, saliva, semen, or skin cells at a crime scene. In Illinois, for example, some 13 chaps condemned to death have been exonerated of their capital crimes during the past 23 years, though only in part because of DNA tests, and it was this fact that Governor Ryan, in January, used as justification for suspending further executions. "Until I can be sure that everyone sentenced to death in Illinois is truly guilty; until I can be sure, with moral certainty, that no innocent man or woman is facing a lethal injection, no one will meet that fate," the governor intoned. And much the same sentiment seems to guide the thoughts of the other conservative gurus who have changed their minds or are entertaining doubts about the death penalty.

That also is the brunt of Mr. Cannon's argument in *National Review*. Pointing to his experience in invalidating the convictions of condemned criminals, as well as to the 82 known cases of capital convictions since 1981 that have been "set aside for one reason or another" (not necessarily, be it noted, because innocence has been proved, though the author rather leaves the reader with that impression), Mr. Cannon insists that innocent people have certainly been executed and that "the right question to ask is . . . whether the government should be in the business of executing people convicted of murder knowing to a certainty that some of them are innocent."

That, essentially, is also the argument advanced by Buckley, Robertson, and Will, and it is entirely without merit. Note, first of all, that Mr. Cannon claims to be arguing that a convict shouldn't be executed unless we are certain he's guilty, which is reasonable. But what he actually says in the sentence quoted above is that the state is executing people it is certain are innocent. Not only are the two claims quite different, but there is no evidence whatsoever that, in recent years, any innocent person has been executed (let alone that state authorities knew for a certainty he was innocent). Neither Mr. Cannon nor anyone else even claims that it's so—except by inference. Because some people condemned to death in recent years have been shown to be innocent, therefore some people who were executed were also innocent. That may be true, but it doesn't follow, and it hasn't been established.

Moreover, if DNA testing proves inno-

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cence in some cases, in others it ought to prove guilt, an implication that blows the argument about "certainty" out of the water. The argument is that, as Governor Ryan says, until we "can be sure, with moral certainty," that no innocent person is being executed, we should have no executions. But what if we are certain he is guilty? If the "conservative case against capital punishment" applies only to innocent people wrongly condemned to death, then it's not an argument against capital punishment but an argument against executing innocent people, which no one questions.

As for "certainty" itself, the governor, Mr. Cannon, and some of the other critics invoke it casually. The fact is that "certainty," in the sense they are using the word, is rarely available in contested criminal proceedings or any other human judgment. The standard in American courts of law is that guilt must be proved "beyond a reasonable doubt," but that is not the "certainty" the critics demand. In Maryland this summer, liberal Democratic Gov. Parris Glendening commuted the death sentence of a man named Eugene Colvin-el, who was convicted of a 1980 murder in which his bloody fingerprint was found at the crime scene. The convict was also known to have pawned a pocket watch belonging to the victim. In commuting the sentence, Governor Glendening said, "I believe that Colvin-el committed this crime, but I do not have the same level of absolute certainty" as in other cases. If Colvin-el's DNA had been found on the victim instead of his fingerprint, would that have established "certainty" for the governor? By this standard, you have to wonder how anyone can ever know anything. The standard of "certainty" collapses into epistemological nihilism.

Yet I venture to guess that if someone else's fingerprint had been found at the crime scene, that would have been taken as certain proof of Colvin-el's innocence. Mr. Cannon, as well as Governors Ryan and Glendening, seem to have no problem with "certainty" when it points to innocence and gets somebody off Death Row; it's only when everyone else—police, prosecutors, judges, and juries—is certain of guilt that they invoke doubt.

In any case, it is not the business of a governor, in Illinois or Maryland, conservative or liberal, to second-guess the courts. The reason we have courts at all is to establish what Governors Ryan and Glendening insist on deciding for themselves. If the governors have good reason to believe condemned men have been wrongfully or unfairly convicted (through new evidence or reviews of trials and appeals), then commutations, reprieves, or pardons may be in order. But to overturn what the courts have already determined through due process simply because it doesn't conform to the governors' private whims is a usurpation of judicial authority.

Of course, innocent people may well have been executed. Mr. Cannon mentions the case of Bruno Hauptmann, executed in 1936 for the murder of the Lindbergh baby, and there is good reason to believe Hauptmann was railroaded to his death by the state of New Jersey (particularly by the head of the New Jersey state police at the time, a gentleman named Norman Schwarzkopf, father of the general glamorized in the Gulf War. Slaughtering innocent people may run in the family blood, much as killing criminals ran in the blood of the Sanson clan). As Mr. Cannon acknowledges, errors happen, and sometimes, as we all know from the novels of Raymond Chandler and James Ellroy, the cops or prosecutors pick a guy for the fall simply because he looks good for it, not because there's any real evidence.

But these are not flaws of the system of punishment. They are, at most, flaws of the law-enforcement and judicial systems or of human nature itself, and if government is going to be halted by them, it's not clear what it can do. If the criminal justice system is convicting innocent people, should it impose any punishment at all? Mr. Cannon speaks of the waste experienced by wrongfully convicted men "released after years on Death Row with a pardon or a half-hearted apology by the state and, if they are lucky, an inadequate monetary settlement." Of course, the same could be said of innocent men sentenced to life imprisonment. Given the critics' certainty of uncertainty, it's hard to see how you could cross the street without being smacked by a truck.

None of the arguments against capital punishment mounted by conservatives in recent months is very new, and none is particularly compelling. No matter how advanced forensic techniques become, there is always going to be an element of uncertainty in some cases, perhaps in all cases, just as there always has been. What the new conservative "case against capital punishment" really proves is not the injustice or inexpediency of the death penalty, but the disintegration of the conservative mind and its digestion by the omnivorous mentality of the left, to the point that it is no longer distinguishable from the latter.

"The age is running mad after innovation," Samuel Johnson remarked to Sir William Scott when he learned that the procession of condemned prisoners from Newgate jail to Tyburn tree was to be abolished, "and all the business of the world is to be done in a new way; men are to be hanged in a new way; Tyburn itself is not safe from the fury of innovation." Dr. Johnson was not a cruel man, and it's doubtful he took any pleasure in the executions that served as spectator sport in the England of his time, but he saw in the abolition of the procession of the damned an ominous symbol of what was coming: a creeping uncertainty about good and evil, right and wrong, justice and injustice, and reward and punishment that at first infected only those of his own contemporaries who were most furious for innovation, but which eventually would spread to those who are supposed to be immune to it. The consequence of the collapse of moral certainty is an unwillingness to assert moral authority of any kind or to back it up by the use of force, whether it involves merely the spanking of children or the highly skilled mystery of executing criminals, and the collapse and its consequences have been evident in the mentality of the left ever since Dr. Johnson's day, to the point that they now threaten the survival of civilization itself. What the "conservative" case against capital punishment shows is that the collapse is no longer confined to the mind of the left but has captured a major beachhead within the mind of the right as well. That capture confirms, once again, that the right, as it has been known for the last half century, no longer exists except as an appendage of the left, and that it can no longer serve as a useful instrument of resistance to leftist demands. c

When in Rockford,

Eat at

Lee's Chinese Restaurant

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Letter From Venice

by Andrei Navrozov

About the Tourists

◆

Summer in Venice means tourists. Do I hate them? No more, I assure you, than a patient stricken with a mortal illness hates the individual viral agents, or virions, which are draining the nucleic-synthesizing energy of his body cells to replicate themselves. He hates the disease, which is making him weak, old, and ugly even as he awaits death, but it would take an extraordinarily perverse human mind to revile a faceless submicroscopic particle of the kind first described by my compatriot Dmitry Ivanovsky in 1892 and finally shown to exist by W.M. Stanley in 1935.

We loathe and fear epidemic plagues, evil tyrants with atom bombs, and even fairy-tale ghosts and dragons, because they and their like have left a record of suffering in our collective cultural memory, but the truth is that our emotions simply cannot reach beyond the light stage of the microscope. Imagine asking a grieving widow, who has just lost her husband to cancer, which characteristic of his killer she finds most repellent. Is it the nucleic composition? The structure of the capsid?

The whole deadly drama of the epidemic that strikes Italy in summertime is the faceless uniformity of the tourist mass. As soon as the patient begins to run a high temperature, hoping to allay the feverish, sweltering afternoon heat by cranking up bar awnings, opening cafe umbrellas, and hosing down the sidewalks, millions of faceless virions in white sneakers throng every vessel and swell every node. I have no medical training, and the term "sneakers" is, I am quite certain, a hopelessly obsolete way of describing what the travelers in Europe have on their feet.

All I can say is that these bulky polymer parcels are nearly always white, which, given the variety and abundance of consumer desires, and of technical means for satisfying them, in the United States and elsewhere, is genuinely puzzling. It is as though there existed in the world but a single shade of lipstick, and just one sort of perfume, both manufactured in a factory by the name of Red Moscow. Why not make them black, pink, pomegranate? Why not brand them as eclipse black, whisper pink, passion red? Perhaps the explanation lies in the fact that tourists in Italy are almost invariably Caucasian, and white people think that so long as they are white, thick plastic foot coverings are elegantly understated. In Russia, people used to think that army boots, unless they squeaked, were inconspicuous.

Here are two posters snatched from a fairly expensive hotel in Rome, where I went to meet the conductor Evelino Pidò, down from his native Turin for the season premiere of *La Traviata* at the Teatro dell'Opera. I was waiting for the maestro at the reception with our mutual London friend Didier de Cottignies, when my eyes fell on a bulletin board completely covered with dozens of similar announcements. Though mystified and apprehensive, Didier nonetheless collaborated by diverting the desk's attention while I harvested them in sheaves:

Michigan Catholic Radio
Your Escort: Carrani Incoming s.r.l.
6:45 Wake Up Call
6:30-10:00 Breakfast
7:45 Departure St. Peter's for Canonization Mass Meeting in Lobby
Free Afternoon

Another memorandum, which deals more explicitly with aspects of dress and behavior, is headed "Your Daily Tour Itinerary LPRL/239":

LONDON, PARIS, ROME
Welcome to Rome!
Friday 28th. Optional: Rome by Night & Dinner. Casual Clothes.
Saturday 29th. Optional: Vatican Museums. Comfortable Clothes but No Shorts.
Optional: Tivoli Gardens & Dinner. Comfy Shoes, Smart/Casual Wear.
Sunday 30th. Airport.
Your Tour Director:
Susan & Veronica.

There you have it, 239 canonization mass meetings in hotel lobbies and comfy shoes, 239 casual afternoons in optional clothes, 239 Romes by Night, and that's only the bookings of a single tour operator, "Trafalgar: The Best in Europe." Multiplied by what, 20 loyal employees of Michigan Catholic Radio? That's 4,780, or 9,560 sneakered feet. How many Michigan Catholic Radios? How many Trafalgars? Oh, thousands, so we're easily talking about a white sneaker for every man, woman, and child in Italy, a kind of global Imelda Marcos wardrobe in reverse, with identical items of footwear as far as the eye can see. No, what am I saying! If they all stood on a single wardrobe shelf, at three sneakered feet to a sneakered meter they would stretch for something like 12 million kilometers. The circumference of the earth at the equator, it may be recalled, is a mere 40,000 kilometers.

Naturally, here in Venice, as everywhere else in Italy and in the rest of tourable Europe, the tourists wear the same-looking jeans, have the same-looking knapsacks on their backs, and eat the same airline food as they approach their destination. When the human virions deviate from their cell-block, uniform norm, it happens as inexplicably as a prison riot on a hot summer's night. For instance, why is it that airlines provide their passengers with metal forks, spoons, and knives when everything else on their folding trays, including of course the food, is made of plastic? Why is it that visitors to the Vatican may not wear shorts, when it is quite clear that the last vestiges of respect and decorum (to say nothing of any more narrowly religious sentiment) were shed by the tourist mass a generation ago? Why is it that Susan and Veronica are not lesbian activists, or at least single mothers?

If one believes, as I do, that the most lethal disease ever experienced by mankind is totalitarianism, one can only assume that European tourism is yet another of the many ways in which the citizens of Western democracies are preparing themselves, and are being prepared, for this imminent global plague. In *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Ro-*

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man Empire, Gibbon wrote of the nonconformist who, in escaping from Rome, could once hope to find:

> a secure refuge, a new fortune adequate to his merit, the freedom of complaint, and perhaps the means of revenge. But the empire of the Romans filled the world, and, when that empire fell into the hands of a single person, the world became a safe and dreary prison for his enemies. The slave of Imperial despotism, whether he was condemned to drag his gilded chain in Rome and the senate, or to wear out a life of exile on the barren rock of Seriphus, or the frozen banks of the Danube, expected his fate in silent despair. To resist was fatal, and it was impossible to fly.

In other words, it is not enough that an American should eat hamburgers in Philadelphia; he must also eat hamburgers in Venice. It is not enough for him to dress like a globetrotting athlete at home, in the United States of America; for the homogenizing process to be effective, he must also dress like a Harlem athlete in the United States of Europe. To resist must be fatal; it must also be impossible to fly.

Andrei Navrozov is Chronicles' *European correspondent.*

Letter From Inner Israel

by Jacob Neusner

Lehayyim—"To Life," Not Abortion

◆

Since many Jewish institutions and individuals speaking "as Jews" (or so they say) favor unrestricted abortion, pro-life people often assume that Judaism does, too. But when we distinguish the personal opinions of individuals from the doctrines of a faith set forth in authoritative holy books, matters prove more complex. And when we realize that, from the time of Spinoza to the present, not all of those who identified themselves as Jews have professed the religion of Judaism, we recognize a considerable error: the confusion of public opinion among Jews, which tends to favor liberal over conservative positions in politics, with the theological judgment of Judaism as set forth in the Torah.

A broadly circulated new essay, "A Torah-View of Abortion," by distinguished Orthodox Judaic religious leader Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, an American who has settled in Efrat, Israel, provides a clear and succinct account of the matter. Riskin perspicaciously sees the issue of abortion on demand in Exodus 21:22-23: "and if two men strive together and hurt a woman, causing her to miscarry, and there is no fatal harm, he shall surely be fined. . . But if fatal injury follows, then you shall give life for life." Riskin properly reads the "fatal injury" to refer to the woman, not the unborn child, and he calls attention to the well-established law of the Mishnah, the authoritative second-century law code on which the Talmud of Babylonia is constructed, that "one life cannot set aside another life." Hence, if a woman's life is in danger, even in labor, the unborn child is to be destroyed so as to save the life of the mother. The rule, of course, is irrelevant to the contemporary debate, since (in general) it is not the life, but the convenience, of the mother that is at stake; to put matters more charitably, abortionists never advocate legal abortion limited to the purpose of saving a woman's life.

The real question is: Is the fetus considered a life that is sacred? The answer is unequivocally yes. The Babylonian Talmud takes the position that, if a pregnant woman dies on the Sabbath and it is possible to remove the fetus so that the child may survive, one is to violate the laws that protect the sanctity of the Sabbath in order to save the life of the fetus. That ruling provides unambiguous evidence on the issue at hand. Since the law maintains that the Sabbath's sanctity may be violated *only* to save a human life, the ruling clearly rests upon the premise that the unborn child is fully human. The Babylonian Talmud further holds that life begins when the soul and body are united, which is the 40th day after conception.

Riskin asks, "Can we call a fetus a full-fledged life, with complete rights and full protection entitled for all human beings?" He finds his answer in the legal code of Moses Maimonides, a principal authority for Judaism. Judaism frames its theological opinions through rulings on what people may or may not do, on the theory that what we do is an authoritative statement of what we are, and what we aim to be: in God's image, after God's likeness. Accordingly, if we want to find the authoritative theological ruling on any question, we must start with the normative account of how people are supposed to behave. From that concrete and irreducible fact, we extrapolate the theological principle. On the issue of abortion, to grasp Maimonides' view—which enjoys the authority and standing of the view of Judaism—we shall have to move in two distinct steps.

The first is his explanation of why, if the fetus is inside the womb, the mother's life takes precedence. (When the head has emerged, that is no longer the case, because one life is not set aside in favor of another.) Maimonides' reasoning is, on the face of it, somewhat jarring. He says we are obligated to destroy the fetus "because the fetus is considered a pursuer, in effect, a murderer," in threatening the life of the mother. In his laws of murder, Maimonides rules that "if we come upon a potential murderer clutching a knife in hot pursuit of someone in flight, we are obligated to do what it takes to stop the pursuer, even if it means killing him" (a ruling that the New York courts would do well to contemplate). Riskin comments:

> By placing the law of abortion within the framework of the laws of murder and then offering the analogy of the fetus to the legal position of a potential murderer, who is to be destroyed, Maimonides opens the nature of the fetus for detailed analysis.

His analogy treats the fetus as a being in its own right; it is not part of the mother. It is a potential life, and, Riskin says, "one cannot get rid of the fetus at will."

The fetus may be part of the mother, maintains Judaism in Riskin's reading, but that does not mean the mother owns the fetus or is free to dispose of him at will. Riskin writes, "Treating a human life seriously means that we have to treat potential human life seriously as well. If the mother cannot destroy her own life, she cannot destroy a life that is not hers either." If the fetus threatens the life of the mother, he must be destroyed. The law of Judaism recognizes as life-threatening psychological as well as physical

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dangers, and "each case [is] to be judged on its own merits by medical and rabbinical counseling." But Riskin is explicit: "When no mitigating circumstances exist, and the proposed abortion proves to be only a desire to get rid of an inconvenience, Jewish law . . . clearly forbids the taking of potential life."

That is, pure and simple, the view of Judaism on abortion on demand, feticide, "pro-choice," and a variety of other issues concerning the sanctity of life. Judaism is a life-affirming religious tradition maintaining that the human being is "in God's image" not only after emerging from the womb but from the 40th day within the womb. That position is not identical to the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox view, but it is entirely congruent. Accordingly, when we hear that "Judaism" affirms the "right" of women to abort their babies, the correct theological response is simple: Some, perhaps many, Jews may take that position, but the authoritative voice of Judaism—the Torah as mediated by the great sages through time—recognizes no such right, because the Torah affirms life, and, specifically and explicitly, the right to life of the fetus in the womb.

The 20th century was marked by death on a cosmopolitan scale. We Jews, of course, have suffered disproportionately (or so it seems to us; the Cambodians have good reason to disagree, as do the Armenians). With one million dead on the Marne and two million before Verdun, with seven million starved to death in the Ukraine and 20 million Soviet citizens dead in World War II (not to mention the millions of Chinese wantonly killed by the Japanese during World War II and the hundreds of thousands of Japanese who died in atomic explosions and the millions more who died in battle)—the list goes on and on—with all that killing, one mass murder more or less will scarcely make the case more persuasive. The affirmation of life in the face of death should define the critical existential task.

Jacob Neusner is Research Professor of Religion and Theology at Bard College.

Crackpots

by Gail White

I have a friend who wants to restore the Czar.
Seriously. As if this burst of love
would turn the empty streets of Petersburg
into a set for Boris Godunov.

He thinks a royalist Russia would delight
in festivals, would never drop the bomb.
And you can find him on the internet
at getaczar dot com.

How to protect my friend, who might have been
a national treasure once, almost a saint?
I only wish there were an NEA
with grants for the incorrigibly quaint,

or Shelters for the Harmlessly Obsessed
(unworldly, therefore not completely sane).
Without its nest, the Great or Common Crackpot
may never breed again.

Letter From Hawaii

by Brandon Bosworth

Confiscate 'Em, Dano!

◆

Hawaii is a liberal state. Despite being heavily Catholic, it was the first state to legalize abortion. There is no death penalty, or even life sentences. Labor unions still wield considerable power. The Democratic Party enjoys one of its most solid majorities in the country. Most of the few Republicans in elected office are barely to the right of the Democrats.

But there is discontent in the air.

The first sign of rebellion came in the wake of the state supreme court decision that opened the door for possible gay "marriages." The court ruled that the state constitution did not bar these unions. If Hawaii wanted to continue to recognize only marriages between a man and a woman, the law would have to be changed or clarified. The legislature was squeamish about changing the constitution, and there were the usual accusations of "homophobia" and "bigotry" directed at those who defended traditional marriages. The politicians thought that the enlightened people of Hawaii would support granting new rights to homosexuals. They were wrong.

In 1998, the issue was put on the ballot. Voters were asked if the legislature should change the wording of the constitution to ensure that marriage remained a heterosexual institution. Despite Hawaii's reputation for "tolerance" and all the money that poured in from out-of-state gay activists to defeat the initiative, over 75 percent of voters favored amending the law to recognize only traditional marriages.

Over the past year, the state legislature has further provoked popular anger. One concerned lawmaker, apparently under the misguided impression that state employees are under too much stress, proposed a law mandating snack and nap time for local public-sector workers. Although Hawaii is historically very pro-union (which made the quest for statehood that much harder during the Red Scare of the 1950's), the letters sections of Honolulu's two daily newspapers were swamped with correspondence from an-

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gry readers ridiculing the ludicrous proposal.

Another bill sought to make organ-harvesting *mandatory*. Even the director of Hawaii's organ bank was appalled. Again, a flood of letters protested the bill. If the state can take your body parts, what *can't* it claim? Does liberty mean anything to would-be heart and eye grabbers?

Apparently not. In that same session, the Hawaii legislature was filled with proposals for restrictive and unconstitutional gun laws. Much to the surprise of lawmakers, Hawaii's supporters of the Second Amendment got angry—and for good reason.

Consider the following proposals: Mandatory re-registration of firearms every five years; mandatory "safe-storage" of all firearms in a commercial gun safe; forcing medical personnel to provide the police chief with the names of patients seeking psychiatric care or counseling so the chief could confiscate the patients' guns (doctor-patient privilege, anyone?); restricting ammunition sales to those who can prove they have a legally registered firearm in that particular caliber; banning individuals who have sold a gun from buying a new one for ten years; creating a "firearm-owner identification card"; and, of course, outlawing the sale and ownership of all handguns. It was enough to make Sen. Charles Schumer take out an NRA membership.

A bill to make it easier for citizens to carry concealed weapons was also introduced, but it went nowhere. Technically, Hawaii has concealed-carry permits, but they are only issued to civilians at the discretion of their local police chief. About a dozen people in the islands—out of a population of over one million—have a permit.

Most of the gun-control bills were introduced in response to a shooting spree at the Honolulu Xerox building. Yet the only proposed legislation that could have prevented the Xerox killings was the bill liberalizing the issuance of concealed-carry permits. Even with the Xerox incident, gun deaths are rare in Hawaii. The state ranks 49th in overall gun deaths and 44th in firearm-related homicides. In any given year, about 24 people are murdered in Hawaii; about six of those homicides are committed with a gun.

Hawaiian gunowners have been through this before. A previous attempt to ban handguns in the early 1990's was defeated, but a law was passed making it mandatory for anyone buying a handgun to go through a minimum of six hours of training. The waiting period for handgun purchases in Hawaii is two weeks. The ten-round capacity limit on semi-automatic pistols was in effect long before the Brady Bill. All new guns are registered with the state.

Despite all the laws restricting the right of Hawaii's people to keep and bear arms, the state has a very lively firearms community. On any weekend, you can go to the Koko Head public shooting range and find sportsmen from every walk of life. It is always busy, and you can easily wait an hour for a firing line to open up. All of the state's prestigious private schools, such as Kamehameha, St. Louis, and Punahou, have teams that compete in small-bore rifle tournaments. Apparently, someone at these schools understands that a child with a gun in his hand is not always a psychotic monster.

Tourists who never venture far beyond Waikiki don't realize how rural large parts of Hawaii are. Go to an outer island like Kauai or the Big Island, and you will see farms and old pickup trucks with "Keep the Country *Country*!" bumper stickers. Better yet, go to Molokai, an island with no fast-food restaurants, no traffic lights, and just a single stop sign. People live off the land, and that often means venturing into the mountains, hunting for game birds, mountain sheep, or the wild boars Hawaii is known for. The same can be said for those Oahuans who live far from the hustle and bustle, in places like Makaha or the North Shore. Not everyone who throws a luau buys his pork from Safeway, and not everyone lives in a Honolulu high-rise where gun ownership is *déclassé*.

When the gun-control activists launched their latest attacks, the firearms community defended itself. Republican State Sen. Sam Slom brought in John Lott, author of the definitive *More Guns, Less Crime*, to speak to the legislature about the benefits of concealed-carry laws and the dangers and ineffectiveness of many of the proposed gun-control measures. Renowned civilian and law-enforcement trainer Chuck Taylor sat in on one of the proceedings. (Shocked by the strong anti-gun rhetoric of Honolulu Police Department Major John Kerr, Taylor commented, "You guys got a problem here. It's your cops.") At open hearings, *nine times* as many citizens showed up to oppose the gun-control bills as did to support them. Of course, the Senate Judiciary Committee report described the anti-gun partisans as "rational and extremely sane" while the pro-gun-rights people were dismissed as "very opinionated." But most letter writers to the *Honolulu Advertiser* and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* supported gun rights, in contrast to the editorial stance of both newspapers.

Did all this work on behalf of the Second Amendment pay off? Amazingly, it did. None of the really repressive gun-control measures became law, and a movement of farmers, blue-collar workers, ex-military personnel, and other everyday citizens defeated a scheme hatched by politicians and bureaucrats. It was a great victory for liberty.

Hawaii's citizens have had to swallow a lot of nonsense over the past 50 years. As the battle over gun rights shows, they might have had their fill.

Brandon Bosworth calls Aiea, Hawaii—the largest all-vowel city in the United States—home.

Letter From the Upper Midwest

by Sean Scallon

A *World* Series?

◆

St. Louis Cardinals slugger and home-run record holder Mark McGwire had a bone to pick with Major League Baseball. He was none too happy that the first regular season game of the 2000 campaign, matching the Chicago Cubs and the New York Mets, was played outside the United States—in Japan, no less. The major leagues had sold out for money, McGwire said, in staging the games overseas. Now, there's a surprise.

McGwire was the first athlete in any major professional sport to voice misgivings about playing a regular season game outside the United States. Baseball has joined professional hockey and basketball in forcing regular fans, at least those not prone to insomnia, to wait a day to find out how their teams fared. Pro football has played overseas exhibition games for several years.

But McGwire may be wrong when he

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says baseball's sellout is only about money. Deeper forces are at work in the glass towers that house the offices of professional sports. There is a conscious desire at the highest levels of these organizations to take their sports global; to think not just of the fans in section AA of the upper deck but also those living in yurts in the Gobi Desert. One can be a Chicago Bears' fan in Aruba just as well as in Aurora, right?

Then again, maybe it is about money: about increasing your fan base, market share, television rights, and licensing agreements. The foreign fan can buy sports merchandise and follow his favorite team with a satellite dish on the top of his tin-roof shack. Kosovo Albanians wore Michael Jordan jerseys in their refugee camps. Yugoslav youths often wear baseball caps bearing their favorite NBA logos.

Remember how impressed you were when the Super Bowl announcers would say how many people around the world were watching the game along with you? Remember how cute it was to listen to the Japanese announcers call the play-by-play in the Rose Bowl for a few seconds?

That was back when America, the leader of the free world, allowed its subjects a peek at what Americans do with their spare time on January afternoons. And to imitate us, other countries imported these sports. Americans fighting overseas in the two world wars, Korea, and Vietnam, as well as those maintaining the empire's garrisons in peacetime, helped export America's sports culture. One could not be a good communist and play baseball (except in Cuba). If Lyndon Johnson had not sent troops to the Dominican Republic in 1965, would we have Sammy Sosa today?

One by one, American sports like basketball, football, and baseball followed the conquistadors all over the world, the way draft horses followed the Spaniards, or the way cricket, rugby, polo, badminton, lawn tennis, and soccer followed the British Empire.

Now, the consequences are washing up on our shores, as Japanese cars did after we rebuilt Japan's industrial capacity. A quarter of Major League Baseball players are from overseas, mostly from the Caribbean Basin, but increasingly from Asia. Europeans and Africans are pouring into the National Basketball Association. Watch an NBA draft, and see how many names you cannot pronounce.

Pro scouts are convinced that there is a dearth of skilled American players. They need foreign players to keep their teams competitive, just as treacherous American multinationals search for computer engineers from India while 45-year-old American technophiles look for work.

The major leagues have expanded into every nook and cranny of the country until there isn't enough great local talent to fill all of the available slots. NBA teams draft kids fresh out of high school or after one season of college ball and then whine about how poor the quality of play is. Qualified coaches are in short supply for youth leagues. Budget cuts and "gender-equity" schemes have ravaged school sports programs at all levels of education.

Still, in order to keep interest high in faraway places and to make sure those kids keep dreaming, NBA and MLB officials talk openly about establishing franchises off the North American continent. The Cubs could open their season in Japan—not against the New York Mets, but against a Tokyo team. Now that's a road trip everyone's looking forward to.

Those who run professional basketball, baseball, and hockey see themselves as citizens of the world. The idea that basketball and baseball are *American* sports, and that *American* fans should be catered to, is as quaint as a peach basket. There's too much money to be made in trying to make little Croatians into little Michael Jordans. Would Serbs and Croats grow up to hate each other if, as children, they were fans of both Toni Kukoc and Vlade Divac? Forget religion, family, race, background, and place. An orange ball and an iron hoop are the ties that bind.

Football, by contrast, doesn't market itself to the world so shamelessly. Yes, there is a "World League" of mostly European teams. But pitting one team of American castoffs and refugees against another is not going to threaten soccer.

Soccer, on the other hand, could threaten football in the United States. Politicians fight over the votes of the millions of moms who take their kids to games and practices in their minivans. No one seems to fight for the football moms' vote. Especially in the nation's inner cities, football is an endangered sport.

While soccer has never penetrated the nation's sport psyche, that may change, with millions of immigrants pouring in from soccer-playing countries. And as these immigrants fan out from the cities, ports, and borderlands, they threaten football's dominance in the cradle of the sport: America's Rust Belt and Deep South.

That leaves hockey, Canada's national pastime. It, too, has been flooded with foreigners, although many have argued that the game is much better since the influx of Russians, Swedes, and Czechs.

But to many Canadians (especially commentator Don Cherry), this rankles. Their sport is slowly being taken away from them. Two Canadian National Hockey League teams have moved to the United States, and more may be on their way. The NHL's honchos, many of them former NBA executives, have pushed the game to the American Sunbelt so that places like Nashville, Phoenix, Dallas, and Raleigh can service all those transplanted and cowardly Northern carpetbaggers nostalgic for ice, if only inside a building. Wales, Campbell, Adams, Norris, and Smythe divisions and conferences have given way to East, West, Northwest, and South. The All-Star Game consists of North American players against the World.

Exporting sports seems to be mostly an American phenomenon. I don't see the Afghan national pastime—throwing a dead goat around while on horseback—taking off in the United States. There are no rings set up for Turkey's national sport, camel wrestling. Nor have U.S. racing tracks been adapted for Saudi Arabia's national pastime, camel racing. And I still can't find cricket wickets in the parks where I live. In the Upper Midwest, European sports brought by immigrants, such as curling, cross-country skiing, and speed skating, have only small followings.

When France won the World Cup of soccer in 1998, National Front leader Jean-Marie Le Pen pointed out that many of the players were immigrants from Francophone ex-colonies, since the French themselves were not exactly smitten with soccer. Could we see the day when a U.S. professional baseball team is loaded with players from somewhere else? Or the World Series is won by a team made up primarily of foreigners? Or the NBA World Championship is won by a team from Beijing? If so, and if you complain, the powers-that-be will simply say, "Hey, that's why there's 'World' on that trophy, xenophobe!" before recommending you for psychiatric treatment, *à la* John Rocker.

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by Srdja Trifkovic

The International Criminal Court: Clinton's Frankenstein's Monster

For years, the Clinton-Gore administration has been in the forefront of efforts to create international judicial bodies—such as the Yugoslav war-crimes "tribunal" at The Hague—that could be used as auxiliary tools of diplomatic decisionmaking in Washington. Madeleine Albright liked the façade of legality that could be invoked to justify their policies. All along, of course, they rejected any thought of being subjected to the judgment of similar institutions themselves.

But by systematically undermining the rule of law in international affairs, the administration has helped create a judicial Frankenstein's monster that it does not control. The administration is now at loggerheads with friends and foes alike over the establishment of a permanent International Criminal Court (ICC), which would replace the United Nations-backed ad hoc "tribunals." As soon as 60 countries ratify the ICC treaty, the court will officially come into being.

The administration is wary of having a court that could prosecute American officials. The ICC has made some concessions to secure approval from the United States, such as adding a provision that would give national courts priority to try their own citizens. The United States is now under pressure to come on board, especially from the European Union and Canada.

The Clinton administration's objections so far have been technical and procedural rather than fundamental. This is not surprising. The real reason the ICC must be rejected is that it claims universal jurisdiction to try individuals charged with "genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity" anywhere in the world, even if the accused are citizens of a state that has not ratified the treaty and the alleged crime has taken place inside that country's boundaries. If passed, the ICC will remove the remnants of national sovereignty and eviscerate the concept of constitutional government.

The Clinton administration cannot acknowledge that the ICC is a caricature of legality because the court closely follows the model established by the Yugoslav "tribunal," which was supported by ample American money and political clout. So the administration sticks to procedural details. As a sop to U.S. concerns, Article 17 of the ICC Statute drafted in Rome in July 1998 says that a state will be deemed to have primary jurisdiction over a crime "unless the state is unwilling or unable genuinely to carry out the investigation or prosecution." But the ICC judges themselves will have the sole right to decide whether a state is "unwilling" or "unable" to investigate and prosecute, and to determine just how "genuine" its efforts are.

The assertion of jurisdiction by the ICC is clearly contrary to the U.S. Constitution and American law: Only the states and the federal government have the authority to prosecute and try individuals for crimes committed in the United States. Judicial power is "vested in one Supreme Court, and in such inferior Courts as Congress may, from time to time, ordain and establish." No judicial body or tribunal, unless it is established under the authority of the Constitution, may exercise jurisdiction over American citizens for a crime committed in this country, nor may U.S. officials turn their citizens over to a foreign government without a valid extradition treaty.

Like Carla Del Ponte at The Hague, or Louise Arbour before her, the ICC prosecutor will have discretionary powers to investigate criminal cases on his own initiative. The ICC may order international peacekeepers to patrol America's racial or ethnic trouble spots. Somali and Saudi ICC judges could demand extradition of American citizens from the United States to a third country to stand trial, accused of hate crimes against the Nation of Islam.

This is more than the Clinton-Gore administration had bargained for. With their ad hoc "tribunals," they did not seek to de-legitimize war crimes *per se*, but to enhance their own power to decide what *is* a war crime, on the basis of political expediency. For instance, Amnesty International has published reports for years accusing Serbs of all manner of crimes. Those reports were duly amplified by the media propaganda machine. But last June, Amnesty released a blistering attack on NATO, accusing it of committing war crimes. Washington ignored the report, and War Crimes Tribunal Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte announced that she would not prosecute NATO. Such double standards are enforceable for now, and the quasi-legal indignities of international justice remain reserved for Serbia or Rwanda—but only for as long as America remains the dominant world power. But when a countervailing force to its hegemony does emerge, the tables may be turned. The consequences of the Clinton administration's actions may prove fatal to America's sovereignty and to the foundations of its legal and constitutional system.

As international lawyer William Jasper warned in the *New American* two years ago, "We currently have this model in the U.N. war crimes tribunals at The Hague, where methods and standards unacceptable to any civilized country are practiced. All the travesties associated with the Yugoslavian war crimes trials will be replicated in the ICC." Jasper was in Rome when the ICC statute was drafted, and he warns that the ICC architects have no intention of limiting their jurisdiction to genocide or "human rights" as conventionally understood: "Enforced pregnancy," i.e., any limits on the right to abortion, will soon be a crime against humanity.

President Clinton will never understand that the legal system of a country is the product of its distinct culture and religious values. He may resist the drift, but for all the wrong reasons. The proponents of the ICC insist that we live in a global village—we all celebrate political correctness and believe in human rights and democracy—and Clinton has no problem with that. He also thinks that we have to hold the same "core values," because we are all essentially interchangeable.

America's answer to such attitudes was given over two centuries ago. "The freemen of America did not wait till usurped power had strengthened itself by exercise, and entangled the question in precedents," James Madison observed. "They saw all the consequences in the principle, and they avoided the consequences by denying the principle." c

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EDUCATION

Uncle Sam's Classroom

by B.K. Eakman

Yolanda and Raul Salazar of Miami, Florida, naturalized citizens who escaped Castro's Cuba, are finding out the hard way that Uncle Sam's classrooms are not about proficiency at anything, or literacy, or basics. America's schools aren't extensions of the home, where families are held sacred and parents are valued. Instead, American education is about "mental hygiene," defined by psychologists as "preventive psychotherapy."

Case in point: Daniel Salazar, age ten, who has been in the Dade County School system for eight years.

The multitude of psychosocial, behavioral, intelligence, and personality tests that make up a typical child's school record today reveal that Daniel was once an "active, sociable, happy, alert, affectionate, and playful" little boy. Between the ages of two and five, Daniel's motor development and language skills were advanced compared to those of other children his age. His kindergarten and first grade records describe Daniel as enjoying school, having no peer, absence, or disciplinary problems, and maintaining a positive relationship with his parents. He had bridged the gap smoothly from Spanish to English. He wasn't even a finicky eater or afraid of the dark.

By the time the school got through with him three years later, the picture had changed. Daniel had turned into a hostile and unhappy child whom teachers pitted against the people who loved him most: his mother and father.

Daniel's sins? Well, it seems that Daniel suddenly had trouble reading in the third grade. He occasionally skipped letters in words. When his voice became hoarse, the school sent the boy for psychometric testing. Bewildered, Daniel was subjected to a battery of vision tests, hearing tests, behavior-rating scales, and strange assessments such as the Kinetic Family Drawing.

Art not being his forte, Daniel drew a picture of a man, presumably his father, watching television. This was interpreted by the school psychologist as indicating a lack of attention at home. When Daniel said he couldn't draw his mother, this was taken as "possible feelings of ambivalence toward her," not as an honest statement that he was no good at drawing people. Questioned *ad nauseam* about his relationships, he commented that he liked the food his father often brought home after work—thus, the "expert" judgment that food was the only positive thing he associated with his parents.

Meanwhile, the classroom teacher singled out Daniel for preferential seating, assigned him a "buddy," and bribed him with computer time. The combination of interrogation, testing, and special treatment sent an unmistakable message: Something was wrong with him. As Daniel became increasingly apprehensive about the scrutiny (who wouldn't?), he found himself distracted, edgy, and negative concerning his studies. His classmates started teasing him, which made him defensive. Daniel longed to escape his stressful environment, where his every move and gesture were taken out of context. He started complaining that he felt sick, a typical reaction to daily unpleasantness.

The school tagged Daniel with the usual panoply of fashionable (if contradictory) psychiatric labels—Attention Deficit Disorder, dyslexia, hyperactivity, anxiety, emotionally handicapped, learning disabled, low self-concept, depression. Advised that a smaller class would allow Daniel to get the individualized attention her son needed to improve his reading, Mrs. Salazar agreed to it. She was presented with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), which seemed to mean the school would tailor a program to her son's needs until Daniel was confident enough to return to a regular class.

Little did the Salazars suspect that, once in the "special class," there was virtually no possibility that Daniel would ever get out. Moreover, he would be saddled with psychiatric labels that didn't apply to him for the remainder of his school career, and possibly for life. Nor did they understand that, in signing the IEP, they had essentially given up the right to make any further educational decisions concerning their son. They had given the school *carte blanche* to do what it pleased—*in loco parentis*.

Daniel's teachers noticed him rocking back and forth in his seat. This resulted in further psychiatric screening and "counseling." Eventually, Daniel stopped cooperating and became argumentative. He didn't tell the counselor when his beloved grandfather died or when his best friend was badly injured in an accident—it was none of the counselor's business, after all.

Daniel was placed in a class for the "severely emotionally disturbed" (SED), a warehouse environment where little of an academic nature occurred. A peer-pressure-cooker was the last thing Daniel needed. The only way to survive was to adopt an aura of aloofness (in the vernacular of psychologists, "to act out").

Not surprisingly, Daniel's reading and other academic skills declined further, and he became too upset to focus on studying. His parents were angry; his teachers were disinterested; the kids bullied him; and the counselors intimidated him.

By the time the Salazars saw through the scam and balked, the school had attained the upper hand. The final straw came when Mrs. Salazar was threatened under the Baker Act (removal of a child from his home) unless she agreed to put Daniel on psychiatric drugs. She retaliated by taking the school district to court and her story to the press.

"Is this America or not?" she asked television reporters outside a Miami courthouse on February 8. "We left Cuba to get away from a totalitarian state. But now we see the same thing right here. The school staff lied to me about the nature of the class. They invaded my privacy. They took advantage of my child's innocence. They lied again in the courtroom. The more they lie, the more money they get. What's going on here?"

What was going on is politely called "covering your behind." Caught in their own web of deceit, the school district brought in everyone but the janitor to testify on its behalf, including teachers who had never taught Daniel. The district wasted so much of the court's time that

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expert witnesses for the Salazars, brought in to testify on a variety of relevant legal and professional issues, finally had to return home. What should have been a clear-cut case of parental rights became a circus orchestrated by educrats who arguably had a greater stake in the outcome than either Daniel or his parents. If the Salazars managed to overturn the "emotionally handicapped" determination and remove their child from the SED class, other parents would be emboldened. Such a precedent could not be tolerated.

The school district, of course, had an entire arsenal at its disposal—the teachers' union and a cottage industry of mental-health specialists consisting of social workers, special-education resource agencies, behavioral-research institutes, and the American Psychological Association, all of which stand to benefit financially and politically from a burgeoning "at-risk" population. Teams of legal advisors for the school district worked to disallow testimony from any expert witness for the Salazars who might threaten their case (for example, pediatric neurologist Dr. Fred Baughman, on the grounds that he wasn't an expert in learning disabilities).

Like most people, the judge was not expected to know much about the behavioral "sciences." A pediatric neurologist should have been a shoo-in as an expert witness since the school's own "psychoeducational evaluation" had justified massive intrusions into Daniel's family on the grounds that neurological factors might be contributing to the boy's problem. But Dr. Baughman's testimony was disallowed just as he was about to take the witness stand.

The Salazars' ace-in-the-hole was a professional tutor, Barbara Rivera, a petite, blonde dynamo who has never met an "uneducable" child. Having successfully homeschooled her own children, she discovered that they enjoyed seeking out the least fortunate and bringing them hope and concrete educational, financial, and social opportunities. Dozens of big stores contributed surplus items to the Riveras' literacy project. Within five years, the Riveras were taking in the homeless, stocking the bare kitchens of people they hardly knew, nursing other people's sick children back to health, and enlisting the enthusiastic aid of dozens of "uneducable" kids to do likewise.

A down-home woman with a sense of humor, Mrs. Rivera explained to the court that Daniel Salazar didn't have a learning problem. He was simply overwhelmed by a large campus; a seemingly unpredictable environment; and hundreds of little bodies running all over the place. For a child who is already a bit flustered, she explained, the first task he has trouble mastering can sometimes shake his confidence and compromise further learning. Rivera's successes center on recapturing that first botched assignment, then moving on in a small, nurturing environment.

If the school had paid attention to its own case-study evaluation, Mrs. Rivera pointed out, someone would have capitalized on Daniel's strengths, such as higher-than-normal computation skills, an aptitude for music, above-average rote memory, successes with drill and repetition, and increased comprehension when concrete examples are used to explain something. Daniel also had good spatial orientation and above-average auditory memory. The problem was visual perception. But because the old skill drills of previous eras have been discredited by the education establishment (workbooks, for example, are no longer used), teachers have forgotten how to build the self-confidence of kids like Daniel—specifically, by having him repeat tasks he did well in a variety of formats. Punctuation and grammar, for example, improve markedly when children with good sight memories rewrite sentences so that just the nouns or verbs change each time, rather like practicing a favorite football play using different scenarios.

But prospective teachers don't learn these techniques in their university classes now. Proficiency and excellence are not priorities. Indeed, teaching children *how* to learn isn't a priority. Instead, the primary focus in education is psychology and its close relative, social work. "Ed psych," as education majors call it, indoctrinates naive college students into the cult of group-think, a scheme that plays out in the classroom as "cooperative learning," "social promotion," "gradeflation," "process orientation," and "interdependence."

The Salazar case underscores the way in which education policymakers perceive students—"labor force management," "human capital," and "human resources." These labels, like the ones applied to Daniel Salazar, equate human beings with inanimate objects which occasionally "malfunction." Conversely, the ubiquitous surveys, questionnaires, and opinion polls disseminated by these same officials are so personal in nature that children and parents believe that someone important cares what ordinary people think. But the tests and surveys are only marketing tools, implying an autonomy nobody possesses any longer.

A whole range of characteristics never before viewed as destructive, such as strong religious conviction, today are regarded by survey analysts as markers (risk factors) for mental illness. Every raised eyebrow and grimace is scrutinized for some sinister meaning by battalions of professional paranoids who call themselves "scientists." Red-flag behaviors, such as rocking in a chair or swinging one's foot, are matched against arbitrary designations on a checklist drawn up by any one of dozens of behavioral-research institutes. These psychological screening instruments are sold to school districts, government agencies, and corporations to help them "assess" their "human resources."

Beginning at an increasingly younger age, those with unfashionable beliefs and unique character traits are treated as "defectives"—rigid, uncooperative, or unstable blobs who either must be rehabilitated or weeded out of the job pool. Elementary and secondary school-teachers play into the hands of bloated bureaucracies vying for government tax breaks, contracts, grants, or partnerships to help carry the unfunded mandate of political correctness.

Thus, schools today promote success without achievement, ethics without religion, and character without morals. Educators proclaim the message of self-esteem, but any attempt to pull ahead of the crowd is discouraged (except in sports and entertainment) because it might make everyone else feel deficient. Amid all the noisy chatter about "relevancy" and "real-world" experiences, our schools have obliterated the concept of failure.

Clinical-sounding labels such as "emotionally handicapped" may make failure more palatable. They certainly make it more permanent.

Meanwhile, the common pantheon of heroes and villains, poems and stories, paintings and documents that gave a diverse people unity and a common voice and heritage are disappearing. Even basic reading and computation have been made so convoluted and controversial that average parents can no longer follow

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their children's lessons.

On June 2, 2000, the judge handed down a precedent-setting decision in the Salazar case. She determined that the psychiatric examination of Daniel was invalid since it was not conducted by a medical doctor, which is illegal under state law. She agreed that the parents had been misled as to the nature of the "special class" in which the youngster had been placed and ordered him to be returned to a normal educational setting. Apparently, the judge saw through the thinly veiled attempts to intimidate the Salazars into drugging Daniel, as well as the efforts to keep expert witnesses for the parents from testifying in court. Since May, when the judge ordered Daniel placed in regular classes on an *ad hoc* basis before the final decision, his behavior has completely turned around.

Daniel will understand eventually, if he doesn't already, that he was a pawn; another victim of an educational system that calls itself "child-centered" but is actually centered on money and politics. In the 1930's, behavioral eugenicist Paul Popenoe of the American Eugenics Society (later renamed "the Society for the Study of Social Biology") declared that "the educational system should be a sieve, through which all the children of a country are passed. . . . It is highly desirable that no child escape inspection." The landmark, federally subsidized Behavioral Science Teacher Education Project (BSTEP), launched in 1969 at Michigan State University, set this nation on the course described by Popenoe. BSTEP changed education from a ticket to self-determination to a management tool of the state.

Today's "humanized" educational environment is short on transmission of knowledge and long on market research, human experimentation, and psychobabble. Experts with behavioral-science degrees, not education credentials, are merging psychology with computer technology—and, in so doing, they are delivering the Holy Grail of social engineering.

No child today dare march to the beat of a different drummer. The sexpots and studs of the 1960's who thumbed their noses at the rules, called police "pigs," and mocked traditional standards of morality are now hell-bent on micromanaging every facet of people's lives. They dot every "i" and cross every "t," but they never rethink their ultimate objective. They know that the perfect crime is not getting away with something even after one is caught red-handed; the perfect crime is the one that nobody knows has been committed. In education, this has meant launching an army of misguided educators *cum* social workers to examine everything from our opinions to our medical records and bank accounts. All the Einsteins who ever flunked algebra, all the Beethovens who ever composed without hearing, all the mavericks who somehow catapulted civilization thousands of years beyond where it would have been—to the asylum with them. Gently, if possible. Kicking and screaming, if necessary. Resistance is futile.

Or is it? The Salazars' case might teach us a thing or two about the virtues of resistance.

B.K. Eakman, a former teacher turned speechwriter, is executive director of the National Education Consortium and the author of Cloning of the American Mind: Eradicating Morality Through Education *(Huntington House).*

HISTORY

Jesse Jackson, Jr., Refights the Civil War

by Sean M. Salai

The skirmish at Monocacy, "the battle that saved Washington," stalled Jubal Early's rebel army of 15,000 men just 35 miles from the nation's capital in 1864. Since the site in Frederick, Maryland, became a National Battlefield nine years ago, visitors have been reminded how Gen. Lew Wallace's vastly outnumbered men desperately bought time for reinforcements, repulsing the last major Confederate invasion of the Civil War. Now, however, the young park is adopting a new focus.

"We are researching the slaves who were there," Cathy Beeler, the park's chief of interpretation, explains. "We're taking a more holistic approach to interpreting the battle, and are planning to hold a seminar on slavery in conjunction with Antietam next March."

This more "holistic" approach is becoming common at the nation's battlefields, thanks to Jesse Jackson, Jr. Last November, the congressman from Chicago inserted language into the FY-2000 Interior Appropriations Bill requiring that all federally funded Civil War battlefields address the issue of slavery.

As Jackson sees it, some battlefields are "missing vital information about the role that the institution of slavery played in causing the Civil War." His provision directs the secretary of the interior

> to encourage the National Park Service managers of Civil War battle sites to recognize and include in all of their public displays . . . the unique role that the institution of slavery played in causing the Civil War and its role, if any, at the individual battle sites.

Jackson's attempt to legislate historical interpretation has outraged a lot of people, and not just neo-Confederates. Leaders of the Civil War Round Table Associates—one of a burgeoning number of groups representing 25,000 amateur and professional historians nationwide—have vigorously protested the new Park Service guidelines. They point out that the majority of people don't go to Gettysburg or Antietam to learn about the causes of the war; they're interested in the battle.

Robert W. Meinhard, professor emeritus of history at Winona State University in Minnesota and a self-described liberal, is among the most vocal opponents. "The battle is why the battlefield park exists and that is why people come," he argues. "The precious few minutes available for interpretation must be devoted to the battle. . . . I would like to see a new park devoted to teaching about slavery as the cause of the war, which I feel is very important. But not on battlefields. Being a teacher for many years, I know that you simply can't have split objectives and cover both adequately."

Another point man in the opposition is Jerry L. Russell, a Little Rock-based political consultant who runs both the Round Table Associates and HERITAGEPAC, a political action committee devoted to battlefield preservation. He also believes that the addition of a socioeconomic focus to the 15-20 minute battlefield instructional programs detracts from the battles themselves. "Clearly not," Park Service chief historian Dwight Pitcaithly assured Russell in correspondence. "The

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job of the National Park Service . . . is to discuss the events of the battle and place them in a larger context."

But Russell sees the same problem as Meinhard. "It's a zero sum game," he says. "If they add something about slavery, something about the battle is consequently lost. It's that simple."

"If they want to create a museum devoted to making a case for slavery as the cause of the war, I'm all for it," Russell continues. "But Congress established the national battlefields with a mandate to commemorate the battles and the men who fought there. This should carry more weight than Rep. Jackson's directive." Russell and other military historians insist they don't have a problem with social history in principle; imposing it upon battlefields is what upsets them.

Jesse Jackson, Jr., however, makes no pretense about his objective. At Ford's Theatre in May, he spoke at a two-day forum on slavery, the national memory of the war, and its impact at home. "Until these hallowed grounds . . . become sites where everyone in our society can find their story," he told battlefield officials in closing, "you have not done the job expected of you by our Federal Government."

When one park interpreter at the seminar pressed Jackson about what right he, a lawyer by trade, had to impose his views on government-employed historians, Jackson replied that the new act of Congress represents "the will of the people." He then added, "An act of Congress created your job."

Leading Civil War historians, including Princeton's James McPherson and University of Maryland professor Ira Berlin, also spoke at the forum. "Did slavery cause the Civil War? The perennial question cannot be escaped," Berlin told the *Washington Post* shortly before the event. "It has to be addressed." But on every battlefield? Military historians are up in arms, demanding the right to decide within local contexts. "Let's get back to the purpose of the parks," retorts Jim Court, longtime superintendent of Little Bighorn, "which is to interpret them individually."

Yet those who maintain the battlefields are currently working diligently to do just the opposite in order to comply with the policies established at the Ford's Theatre gathering. Field interpreters at Antietam will soon be taught to incorporate social history into their programs. Last summer, Manassas unveiled a new exhibit on slavery, civilian life, and the states' rights perspective. And Vicksburg completed a relatively new exhibit, "Grant's Canal," which details the story of local plantation slaves impressed into manual labor by Gen. Ulysses S. Grant during the siege of Vicksburg. Even the Maryland state legislature has picked up on the initiative, assembling in 1998 a task force of legislators and social scientists that delivered a 500-page report this past January on how the state's schools and cultural institutions currently address slavery.

So far, this juggernaut has met relatively little resistance. Changing museum exhibits, however, is an expensive undertaking. At Vicksburg, Superintendent Bill Nichols feels limited by available exhibit space in the current museum, which he wishes to replace. "It's my understanding that a follow-up meeting to the Ford's Theatre seminar will be held, perhaps in October, although the date hasn't been set," he confides. "We simply don't have the funding to update our exhibits—some of which date back to the 1960's. The Agency's next goal is to develop a strategy for getting that money." He concludes that "The Park Service's attempts to meet the new policies are still very much piecemeal."

In most cases, the "outdated" exhibits at Civil War battlefields teach the tactics and statistics of each battle, keeping with the wishes of military veterans who sought to tell the "story of the battle" in the early years following the establishment of the National Battlefields. And the story of Civil War battles, most military historians contend, had nothing to do with slavery.

But the truth of the battles isn't appropriate for a modern American audience, at least according to Jackson, who toured 18 battlefields to learn about what he calls the "Dixiefication" of American politics. Gettysburg National Military Park is, unfortunately, having more success than Vicksburg in its attempt to conform to Jackson's revisionist demands. "Sadly, Gettysburg, the most-visited of Civil War battlefields, doesn't even mention slavery," complains Katie Lawhon, the park's public affairs specialist. "But, thankfully, we've got a plan to change that." The "plan" is a five-year project to build a new museum that will address, "among other things," the issue of slavery.

But Vicksburg has not been as financially successful as Gettysburg. Thus, the success of its future fundraising now rests on its willingness to follow the dicta of the Ford's Theatre gathering—the more politically fashionable a new addition or renovation, the more likely it is to receive federal dollars. *Must* Congress mandate historical interpretations when allocating money? "It's the age of political correctness," Joe Avalon, publisher of the *Civil War Interactive* website, explained to the *Washington Post* in April, "and we have to include African-Americans in every story."

Jim Court knows firsthand the effects of legislating historical interpretation. His Little Bighorn National Monument was a shrine to General George Custer until a 1991 law forced it to include a Native American focus. Materials now include Native American perspectives on the battle and its historical context.

For years, Civil War battlefields have followed a non-p.c. tradition—one of discussing battlefield valor and a romantic ideal of national reconciliation. But if today's visitors need to hear "the entire story" of the Civil War in 20 minutes or less, what will be omitted?

Sean M. Salai, an editorial intern at Policy Review, *is a sophomore at Wabash College.*

GUNS

Gore's Double Standard on Firearms

by David B. Kopel

Speaking in Atlanta this May, Al Gore joined the National Rifle Association and numerous police unions in supporting federal legislation to override state laws regulating the concealed carrying of handguns. Many states do not allow out-of-state, off-duty police officers to carry handguns. The Vice President wants to force communities to allow non-resident, off-duty visitors, who happen to be police officers in their home state, to carry a concealed weapon.

In contrast, Gore's position paper on "Gun Violence" claims that "Al Gore will oppose efforts to loosen existing limits on concealed weapons." Presumably,

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this means that a future President Gore would sign Sen. Frank Lautenberg's bill to eliminate the laws in 31 states that allow law-abiding citizens to obtain permits to carry handguns for lawful protection, provided they pass a background check.

States would lose decisionmaking power under both proposals: Gore wants to stop states from allowing ordinary citizens to carry guns, and to compel states to allow non-resident, off-duty police officers to carry guns.

Gore's double standard prevails throughout the anti-gun movement. It's virtually impossible to find a gun-control law or proposal that doesn't have a police exemption. Critics claim that "assault weapons" are useful only for killing a lot of innocent people quickly, but the police can possess them. "Junk guns" are called unreliable and worthless for protection, but the police can use them. Gun locks and other technology mandates are not supposed to impede defensive gun use, but police guns are exempt.

One justification for all these exemptions is that the police have special obligations to protect society and are, therefore, entitled to possess superior force. But no one would suggest that police officers should be allowed to carry nerve gas, surface-to-air missiles, grenades, or mortars. Even if we assume that police officers are the only legitimate protectors of society, they should not necessarily be entitled to possess firearms which are forbidden to other citizens—especially those which are forbidden because they supposedly have no protective value.

Arguably, police officers, as defenders of law and order, are uniquely at risk and, hence, have a higher need for defensive weapons. Officers on street patrol in high-crime neighborhoods, for example, face substantially higher risks than most people do. Yet officers who process paper, direct traffic, and who do not routinely engage in dangerous missions or patrol violent neighborhoods are all allowed, under the proposals favored by anti-gun groups, to possess any weapon they want. These officers face no risk of attack greater than, and sometimes substantially less than, the risks faced by people whom Gore and anti-gun lobbyists would disarm—including the owners of gas stations or grocery stores in crime-ridden neighborhoods, women who are being threatened by ex-boyfriends, crime witnesses and jurors who are at risk of retaliation from violent criminals, and elderly people who have to walk through dangerous areas. A police sergeant who sits in a building where every entrance is protected by several heavily armed officers has much less personal risk of attack than a clerk who works the night shift at a convenience store on the wrong side of town.

Another argument for police exemption from gun-control laws is that officers are trained and disciplined and, therefore, less likely to abuse guns than regular citizens. It would be interesting to try that argument on people in the Rampart neighborhood of Los Angeles, or the many innocent people killed in no-knock drug raids, or the Branch Davidians, or the New York City family of the late Patrick Dorismond.

As reported in the Police Foundation's book *Deadly Force: What We Know*, one study of 1,500 incidents concluded that police use of deadly force was not justified in 40 percent of the cases and was questionable in another 20 percent.

Whenever a New York City police officer fires a gun (outside of a target range), police officials review the incident. About 20 percent of discharges are accidental, and another ten percent are intentional violations of force policy. That means that only 70 percent of firearms discharges by New York City police are intentional and in compliance with force policy. In Philadelphia, accidents made up 27 percent of police firearms discharges; in Dade County, Florida, 31 percent were accidental.

According to research by criminologist Don Kates, when police shoot at criminals, they are 5.5 times more likely to hit an innocent person than are civilian shooters. This is partly because the police are more likely to intervene in situations where they do not know the parties, while defensive civilian shooters often know who the criminal is.

Not only are police misuses of firearms in the line of duty common, but their off-duty misuse of guns is disturbingly frequent. When an off-duty New York City policeman fires a gun, *one time out of four* the shooting will be an accident, a suicide, or an act of frustration.

Finally, police officers do not necessarily receive extensive training in the use of firearms. Some do, but many receive only a few dozen hours at the police academy and may only be required to recertify their ability to hit a target once every few years. A large number of gun-carrying officers have not practiced marksmanship since they received their firearms certification as a recruit.

The amount of training in defensive gun use that police officers undergo rarely exceeds that which a civilian could learn at a good firearms-instruction academy. With the advent of inexpensive indoor laser-target systems and high-technology video trainers for "shoot-don't shoot" programs, and the proliferation of civilian firearms schools, citizens can be educated in defensive firearms use to at least the same level of competence as that required of police officers in many jurisdictions.

The real basis for the double standard of Gore and the anti-gun groups is neither logic nor sensible policy: It is the belief that government employees are superior to the governed and, hence, deserve special privileges. Yet the very purpose of the Second Amendment, as well as the rest of the Constitution, is to prevent the emergence of the privileged class that Gore wants to create.

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ECONOMICS

The Myth of Economic Equality

by David A. Hartman

Except in war-time, Washington matters little to the comfort and safety of responsible Americans. Washington does matter, however, as the major source of impoverishment, harassment, and jeopardy. Our Founding Fathers never intended it to be this way.

The last thousand years have been defined by revolutions that freed peoples throughout the civilized world. Yet at the end of the millennium, citizens of democracies secured by those revolutions find themselves under governments far more encompassing than those they replaced. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the United States, where the world's most limited government was founded in 1787 as a republic of sovereign states. Since that time, Americans have acquiesced to the unlimited

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expansion of their central government and relinquished the rights of states, communities, and individuals.

Since this social transformation was voluntary (democratic government, at least in theory, is controlled by the ballot box), we must ask: What would persuade American citizens to surrender their cherished freedoms, heritage, and institutions? The answer lies in the general body of myths upon which socialism was founded, particularly its economic myths.

Socialism's unifying economic myth posits that inequality of income and wealth is unjust and socially inefficient. This requires us to disregard the fact that the free market has been the source of the superior material well-being of democratic societies, and that inequality of wealth is the necessary incentive and consequence of the entrepreneurial successes that generate this bounty.

The socialist goal of economic equality has been a powerful recruiting tool among the less fortunate. It has led to an unprecedented concentration of power in the hands of self-appointed elites who propose to distribute other people's money and property in the name of "social justice," an oxymoron which simply means government confiscation and plunder of productive citizens' rights, property, and income.

The myth that capitalist profits are the fruits of the exploitation of labor enabled socialists to organize the labor movement and recruit soldiers for the left. Yet the United States had the highest wages in the world *before* unionization.

The percentage of productive value received as wages has been remarkably stable in the private sector of the U.S. economy (outside of manufacturing). While unions have been successful in raising employees' share of the wealth in manufacturing, they have lost jobs as export markets shriveled and lower-priced foreign goods replaced domestic products. Before the union movement, the United States had a sizable export surplus in manufacturing. Today, it has a huge (and growing) trade deficit in manufactured products.

The rapid disappearance of the middle class is considered further proof of inequality and exploitation of labor. But an analysis by Robert Rector and Rea Hederman of the Heritage Foundation shows that these income statistics are misleading. Their study, "Income Inequality: How Census Data Misrepresent Income Distribution," argues that if you take into account non-cash welfare benefits, taxation, work-force participation, and work-week variations, the purported income inequities disappear. To the extent that "hollowing-out" is a reality, it is due primarily to the decline in high-wage manufacturing jobs, lost to overseas producers as a result of high-wage union jobs and excessive income taxes.

Perhaps the most persuasive economic myth of socialism is the inherent instability of the capitalist system. While Americans suffered relatively brief recessions and banking panics before the 1930's, the Great Depression caused a crisis in national confidence. This made the leftist myth believable.

John Maynard Keynes argued that the Great Depression was due to the fact that, during periods of rising income, consumers save too much and spend too little, causing subsequent economic downturns. This provided the justification for the socialist claim that only centralized economic planning and regulation could ensure continued prosperity. The prescribed cures were economic stabilizers such as monetary controls, progressive taxation, deficit spending, ever-rising government expenditures, and inflexible union wages.

In fact, the excessive expansion and then relentless contraction of the money supply by the Federal Reserve precipitated the Great Depression and broke the banks, resulting in economic collapse. The plethora of New Deal programs could not restore prosperity nor end the Depression without employing the economic solution of last resort: war.

Long-term consumption versus savings data does not confirm the heart of Keynesian mythology. Even Keynes' short-term analysis was myopic. The foundations of Keynesian economics are thus seriously misleading. The market mechanisms of free enterprise will ensure economic prosperity; government intervention cannot.

A further corollary of the inequality theory is the myth that exploitation causes poverty, and poverty causes crime. Such was the motivation behind Lyndon Johnson's Great Society, which transformed America into a socialist welfare state.

What the Great Society programs in fact proved was that subsidizing single motherhood broke down the family, thereby increasing poverty. Marriage rates dropped by a third, and crime rose as a result of family breakdown. Only the elderly showed real reduction in poverty, and that was because, by 1993, government social-welfare expenditures averaged an absurd $20,000 for every senior citizen, regardless of means, adding serious weight to the crushing burden of taxation on families.

Crime is primarily an economic choice; to the extent that it is cultural, it can only be remedied by two-parent families, work, and individual responsibility. Crime is not the result of poverty; rather, it is a principle cause of impoverishment, as criminal young males do not qualify for good jobs or become married fathers, as businesses flee high crime areas, and as drugs and gangs rule the streets and schools.

Socialism holds that government can remedy social injustice by playing Robin Hood. "Justice" is the philosophical defense for the progressive income tax, capital-gains taxes, estate taxes, and double taxation of corporate incomes. But without outright government confiscation of capital, capital cannot truly be taxed. The econometric studies of Gary and Aldonna Robbins have shown that returns on all U.S. capital after taxes and inflation have been reasonably constant over the post-World War II period, despite wide swings in tax rates and inflation. Virtually all taxation of capital is paid for by those who purchase goods and services. A wide range of econometric studies conclude that inflation, taxation, and deficit spending reduce potential investment capital, resulting in lower incomes for *all* Americans.

The inescapable conclusion is that government robs from all to beggar the middle class and to worsen the poverty it proposes to cure. Predictably, only government and its lackeys prosper.

Another widely accepted socialist myth is that the state is the most efficient provider of social services. Since government usually allows no competition and subsidizes the services it provides from general tax revenues, this illusion is hard to dispel. In addition, our government goes to great lengths to hide taxes from those who pay them (as with half of the Social Security tax). Thus, government's services are perceived to be free or low-cost.

All of these myths are but subsets of the ultimate goal of socialists: the perfection of mankind through an equality of outcomes socially engineered by government. Socialists believe that equality of prosperity can be attained by the noble

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inspiration of social justice alone. Gone would be the loathsome forces of capitalist greed, tribal and family ties, simplistic religious faith, and private prosperity, all replaced by the equality of the utopian socialist state.

What is far more likely to happen is what has occurred repeatedly to civilizations throughout history: The excessive taxation of the productive classes for the benefit of the unproductive, as government confiscates the productive surplus and squanders it, will undermine first the culture and then the prosperity of our society. The rule of law will be replaced by the rule of the lawless. What inevitably will follow is a return to a primitive despotic society and an equality of misery—the only realistic way to achieve an equality of outcomes.

David A. Hartman is the chairman of the board of The Rockford Institute.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

A European Defense?

by Doug Bandow

Be careful what you wish for, goes the old adage. You just might get it. So it is with America's desire that the Europeans do more for their own defense.

The E.U. has proposed the development of a European rapid reaction force of 60,000 men. Although it will be some time before such a unit takes to the field—2003, under current plans—the E.U. conducted war games in February without the United States.

There's no doubt that Europe's military capabilities should be enhanced. Despite possessing a smaller GDP and population than the E.U., America spends 40 percent more on its military.

By almost every measure—total outlays, percentage of GDP, spending per capita—Europe lags far behind the United States. Because of Europe's postwar weakness, U.S. dominance was inevitable when NATO was created in 1949. But some American officials warned against excessive European dependence on the United States. "Permanent troop establishments abroad," observed Dwight Eisenhower in 1961, "discourage the development of the necessary military strength Western European countries should provide for themselves."

Throughout the 1980's, the Europeans routinely failed to honor their promises to increase defense spending. And the gap between U.S. and European military contributions increased after the fall of the Berlin Wall, since Europe cut defense spending faster than America.

A recent audit by the Western European Union (WEU), Europe's formal defense organization, concluded that Europe's militaries are largely ill equipped, outmoded, and unable to fulfill post-Cold War missions. Europe has just one-tenth of America's practical military capabilities.

This was evident in the Kosovo war. The United States provided virtually all precision-guided missiles, intelligence, airlift resources, and 80 percent of aircraft. Three months of bloodless (on the allied side) bombing was possible only because of sophisticated U.S. military technology, developed through massive spending on research and development.

Indeed, NATO is not an alliance. Former National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski more accurately termed Western Europe "largely an American protectorate, with its allied states reminiscent of ancient vassals and tributaries." Despite periodic U.S. complaints about burden-sharing, this arrangement has long satisfied both sides.

After the war against Serbia, however, Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott chided an English audience, "Many Americans are saying: Never again should the United States have to fly the lion's share of the risky missions in a NATO operation and foot by far the biggest bill." In early February, Defense Secretary William Cohen criticized the Europeans for failing to modernize their military arsenals, relying too heavily on America. GOP presidential candidate George W. Bush has cited "Europe's need to invest more in defense capabilities."

The Europeans, too, seem appalled by their pitiful performance. As Javier Solana, who last October shifted from NATO to WEU secretary-general, put it: "To have a good and solid partnership, it has to be more among equals."

Publicly, the Clinton administration professes to be pleased with Europe's greater interest in building effective military forces. One U.S. official told the *Financial Times* that "This is burden-sharing, big time."

In October, the U.S. Senate passed a resolution advocating that the E.U. undertake an "autonomous" intervention "only after NATO had declined to take on that mission." At the end of last year, Secretary Cohen made the same point, advocating that NATO have "first option" on any proposed military action.

Washington's oft-expressed fear is that the European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI) will, at best, distract attention from NATO. At worst, it will lead Europe to end its military reliance on America.

Naturally, the Europeans say there is nothing to fear. French President Jacques Chirac explains that Europe's initiatives "reinforce NATO, in reality." British Prime Minister Tony Blair adds, "It is not an attempt in any shape or form to supplant or compete with NATO."

Although European embarrassment over its relative weakness is real, it is still not clear whether Europe is willing to spend what it will take to end its reliance on America. For instance, Germany has only half the number of soldiers under arms today as it did in 1991. It would cost Berlin an additional two billion dollars a year to fulfill the new E.U. mandate. Yet Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder has proposed to cut more than one billion dollars, or four percent, in military spending this year, and almost ten billion dollars more over the next four years. France's defense budget is also down from last year.

In early December, Secretary Cohen complained that Berlin's miserly military efforts were sending a bad message to new NATO members. In fact, recent initiates such as Hungary say they can't afford to fulfill their commitments to modernize their forces and achieve intercooperation.

The French, at least, recognize the conflict between ends and means. French Gen. Pierre Gallois (ret.) observes, "You can't want a European military organization that can get along without the Americans and reduce military budgets." Similarly, French Defense Minister Alain Richard says, "I think it's not realistic to say we are spending enough and that all we need to do is create more synergy and achieve more efficient cooperation."

Europe must decide: How much is pride worth?

It should be worth a lot, given the likelihood that America will eventually grow

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weary of solving Europe's problems. The United States demonstrated in East Timor that its willingness to intervene is not infinite. Australia had to take the lead in the U.N. peacekeeping force to defend what were overwhelmingly Australian interests. Canberra is now discussing bolstering its military for fear that it might face similar situations in the future.

For a while, Washington may continue to look more favorably upon intervention in Europe. But that is likely to change, especially if NATO's Balkan adventures turn sour. Bosnia offers little argument for a repeat experience: Only Western military occupation holds together an artificial state where corruption dramatically outpaces reconciliation. Kosovo could become even worse if NATO is serious about preserving a multiethnic society under formal Serbian authority—a formula for permanent occupation and possibly a new war, this time against the Kosovo Liberation Army.

A serious European force would allow the E.U. to act if the United States refused and enable the Europeans to defend security interests that are not vital to Washington. However, Europe could do much more with its own military. Chancellor Schroeder argues that "The Europe of the future must be able to defend its interests and values effectively worldwide." With the capability to intervene, explains President Chirac, the E.U. "will have at its disposal all the true means of a foreign policy." The outlines of an independent European stance were evident when European Commission President Romano Prodi announced in February that "any attack or aggression against an EU member nation would be an attack or aggression against the whole EU."

This is precisely what bothers Washington. Despite public declarations of good will, American officials have privately lobbied against the European initiative, with a heavy-handedness that ESDI advocates complain has been counterproductive. "We know the Americans," one anonymous E.U. official told the *Los Angeles Times*. "They want the Europeans to do more in matters of defense, but on the other hand, they're worried about something being done behind their backs."

The devolution of defense responsibilities on Europe is desirable, because Europe no longer needs America. The Soviet threat that gave rise to NATO is dead. Amazingly, Britain and France each now spend more than Russia on defense; Germany's outlays are roughly equal. Europe has a combined GDP of about nine times that of Russia. Italy alone has a bigger economy than Russia.

If the E.U. does create a rapid reaction force, it is hard to imagine the Europeans remaining subordinate to America. In June 1999, Guenter Verheugen, Germany's E.U. ambassador and minister of state for foreign affairs, explained that the purpose of the ESDI "is to engage in active crisis management in Europe with its own resources and under its own responsibility." If Europe acquires the ability to "engage in active crisis management in Europe" and perhaps beyond, what role is there for the United States?

Geoffrey Van Orden, the British Conservative Party's spokesman on foreign affairs and defense, warns that having the Europeans take first crack at European problems "will inevitably have a negative impact on NATO's viability" and fears "the weakening of trans-Atlantic bonds." Former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State John Bolton contends that, in a few years, "We might well face the prospect that it is the WEU that is the real alliance, and NATO the appendage, rather than the other way around." More bluntly, Defense Secretary Cohen warns against allowing the Europeans to "simply fend for themselves."

But why is that such a bad idea? While it isn't likely to occur soon, at least not without American encouragement, why shouldn't Europe take responsibility for its own affairs?

America's vital interest is to prevent a hegemonic power from dominating the European continent. Such a threat no longer exists: Russia can barely defeat Chechnya; Germany possesses neither the will nor ability to threaten its neighbors (imagine an attack on nuclear-armed France); Milosevic's Serbia may be nasty, but it is impoverished and pitiful; terrorists may lurk along the North African coast, but America's military presence in Europe only makes the continent a more attractive target.

Whatever intra-European rivalries might eventually erupt, none are likely to turn violent. The world of the E.U., the euro, and pan-European cooperation is a different world from that which gave rise to two world wars. What is left is the messy, unfinished business of the Cold War, particularly in the Balkans. More distant are a potpourri of tribal conflicts in the Caucasus. Yet none of these are important for the security of Europe, let alone America. Modest improvements in European military capabilities would allow the E.U. states to deal with further instability, should they believe the price of doing so to be worthwhile. Washington could begin by letting the five-nation Eurocorps take over manning, as well as commanding, occupation forces in Kosovo, for example.

Secretary Cohen has argued that "A stronger Europe means a stronger Alliance, and a stronger Alliance is able to deter the threats and maintain peace and stability." But this applies as much to an alliance run by Europe as one run by America. Although Britain's Secretary of State for Defense Geoffrey Hoon contends that "'more Europe' does not mean 'less America,'" it *should* mean less America.

When the world and the threats in it change, so should alliances like NATO. Everyone seems to agree that the Europeans should do more militarily. Now is the time to ask: What should America's role be?

Doug Bandow is a senior fellow at the Cato Institute and a former special assistant to President Ronald Reagan. He is the author and editor of several books, including Tripwire: Korea and U.S. Foreign Policy in a Changed World.

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In The Dark

by George McCartney

Season Your Admiration

In *Mission: Impossible 2* (*M:I 2* to enthusiasts), the boyishly becoming Tom Cruise strikes heroic poses, simulates kung-fu kicks, and hangs charmingly from cliff faces. Unfortunately, the movie constructed around him is not nearly as becoming. It's just another tediously overproduced, contemptuously underwritten farrago of stunts and explosions. Kids will enjoy it, although I suspect they'll find its video-game version more emotionally engaging. Otherwise, there's little of interest unless you're an investor who has bulked up on pharmaceutical stocks. If so, you may find the film's treatment of your cash cow quite riveting—and perhaps a little discomfiting.

The film opens with a riddle. An Einstein look-alike appears on a laptop screen and enigmatically intones that "every search for a hero must begin with what a hero requires: a villain." He then injects something into his arm. That pharmacological something becomes the film's Macguffin, triggering all of its subsequent action. Ethan Hunt (Cruise as the impossible missionary) is sent to solve its mystery. Innumerable explosions, car chases, and kick-fights later, he decodes the riddle and discovers what was in the syringe. It seems an Australian pharmaceutical company has decided to take the guesswork out of research: Instead of waiting for the next big disease to show up, they've elected to be "proactive" (as they say in corporate speak), developing an anti-viral drug and then designing a lethal virus for which it will be the wonder cure.

The parallel with the pharmaceutical industry's less circumspect practices is hard to ignore. While I'm very happy to live in an age when antibiotics and vaccines can cure everything from ear infections to polio, there's no denying that the pharmaceutical giants have too often succumbed to hubris and greed in their rush to develop the next highly profitable cure. At times, they have pushed inadequately tested, enormously expensive drugs onto the market with results that range from useless to utterly disastrous. The swine flu vaccine and thalidomide were two glaring examples. More recently, there has been growing evidence that the blanket prescription of AZT and protease inhibitors for those infected with HIV has done more harm than good, frequently killing HIV-positive individuals who may have been in no real danger of developing AIDS.

Mission: Impossible 2

Produced by Cruise-Wagner Productions and Paramount Pictures
Directed by John Woo
Screenplay by Robert Towne
Released by Paramount Pictures

Hamlet

Produced by Double A Films
Directed by Michael Almereyda
Screenplay by Michael Almereyda, from Shakespeare's Hamlet
Released by Miramax Films

Small Time Crooks

Produced by Sweetland Films
Directed by Woody Allen
Screenplay by Woody Allen
Released by DreamWorks

The film's criminal drug CEO (Brendan Gleeson looking every ounce the part) seeks to eliminate such unseemly consequences by taking the next, all-too-logical step in drug marketing: administering both malady and its patented remedy. He only needs to release a few vials of his deadly virus in downtown Sydney and—*presto*—his antidote will enjoy a thriving market. How's that for gaining market share and preemptively eliminating quibbles about price?

A fanciful interpretation? Perhaps. But the film's writer is Robert Towne, the man who scripted the bracingly cynical *Chinatown* 26 years ago. Given the assignment to make Cruise look like James Bond on steroids, Towne apparently decided to amuse himself by slipping a little subversive subtext into the otherwise standard action heroics.

But what about the film as entertainment? Orchestrated by John Woo of Hong Kong kung-fu fame, *M:I 2* offers a nearly nonstop series of kabooms punctuated by bip-bop hand-to-foot fights, all delivered in lightning montages as the camera alternates dizzily between extreme close-ups and long-distance shots. It's a simple strategy: Pummel the audience into believing they're getting their money's worth. At today's prices, I'd say a 90-percent discount is in order.

While I wish the star power in *M:I 2* had been turned down several lumens, the lack of thespian brilliance undoes Michael Almereyda's *Hamlet* even more than its wrongheaded modernization. The play might have weathered this film's sea change to contemporary Manhattan had Almereyda not forgotten the hero. Unfortunately, this *Hamlet* has docked in the Big Apple without a Hamlet in the hold. Instead of Denmark's troubled prince, we get Ethan Hawke palely loitering. He's little more than a slacker with attitude.

In theory, Almereyda's attempt to bring home the play's timelessness makes sense. After all, Shakespeare himself was updating a tale that preceded him by 700 years or more. In practice, however, Almereyda's film succeeds only in calling attention to the play's historical distance from us. Elsinore is rendered in 21st-century terms in a way that is jarring in its ingenuity. Denmark has become a huge corporation headquartered in one of Manhattan's glass-and-steel office boxes. Claudius is the ultimate corporate climber, murdering his brother in order to install himself as the firm's CEO. Instead of soldiers glimpsing Old Hamlet's ghost wandering across the castle battlements, security guards in the company's lobby pick up a strange apparition on their closed-circuit television monitors. When Claudius and Polonius send Ophelia to spy on Hamlet, they strap a voice-activated tape recorder to her torso. The play within the play is a video com-

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prising scenes from horror and porno films edited together with Monty Pythonesque cartoon drawings.

Even worse than this clumsy modernizing is the film's Hamlet. Almereyda announces his conception of the character by decorating the prince's apartment with posters of James Dean and Ché Guevara, the icons of disaffected, revolutionary youth. Hawke falls in with this conceit all too well. He makes Hamlet a glum, tormented adolescent so inchoately furious with adults he can only speak to them in a contemptuous hiss. He shuffles, dawdles, and mumbles throughout two-thirds of the play, wearing (instead of an inky cloak) a knit cap with ear flaps, the better to defend his boyish innocence from adult contamination. Like so many sensitive romantics before him, he is half in love with death and plays at suicide, holding a gun to his head with mawkish self-pity.

But playing Hamlet as a romantic rebel makes complete nonsense of the text. Clearly, Claudius, not the prince, is the true revolutionary. Not only does he assassinate his brother, the king, he violates taboo by marrying his brother's wife in order to usurp the crown that rightfully belongs to young Hamlet. Furthermore, like many rebels before and after him, Claudius is unfit to rule. Given to drink and uxorious sensuality, he lacks the will to stand fast against the threat of foreign aggression posed by Norway's Fortinbras. In short, *he* is the something rotten in Denmark, infecting the entire state with his desire for power without responsibility.

Almereyda and Hawke have tried to transform Hamlet into an idealistic rebel bent on tearing down a corrupt, fascistic *ancien régime* (in this case, corporate America). But the play makes it clear that Hamlet's mission is to sweep away the new upstart order created by his pleasure-loving wastrel of an uncle and restore the genuine and sterner old order, the one his father had so admirably and responsibly served. Everything Hamlet does and says underlines this reading. Even his apparent slowness to act reveals his conservative intentions: As a man of honor, he would never attack a legitimate ruler on private grounds alone, no matter how repugnant he found him. Unlike modern leftists, Hamlet knows that the personal is not the political. Before he can act, he must prove incontrovertibly that Claudius has usurped the throne. This, of course, is the central tension of the play: sorting out the private from the public, feeling from duty, passion from reason. ("Give me that man that is not passion's slave.") It's this tension that has invited endless psychological and ideological interpretations through the centuries. Interpreters have often gone wrong, however, in allowing their contemporary speculations to drown Shakespeare's clear intent. He presents his Hamlet as the one sane person in a world gone mad with license and hypocrisy. That is why Hamlet appears insane to others. And here is the play's genuine contemporariness. Our time, too, is out of joint, and many a person today has succumbed at one point or another to the Dane's bitter reflection: "O cursed spite, / That ever I was born to set it right!"

Although Almereyda doesn't grasp this, his Polonius does. Playing the baffled counselor, Bill Murray, of all actors, gives every sign of fully understanding the play. With genuine wit, he departs from what has become the standard rendering of his role, making the go-along-get-along courtier a man who knows his limitations all too well. This Polonius knows he's become a windbag and that his children only pretend to listen to him. Yet he still loves them. He delivers his parting words to Laertes in Act I with the hesitation of a man ransacking his memory for the old formulae of prudent conduct. More touching, he tries desperately to translate this time-worn wisdom into words that will sound new and compelling. But he has lost faith in his rhetoric. Even as he sententiously warns his inattentive son against incurring debts, he slips a thick roll of bills into the young man's jacket when he isn't looking. Chiding Ophelia for her imprudent relationship with Hamlet, he's so concerned to prevent her stumbling further that he stoops to tie her undone shoelaces. This Polonius isn't a fool: He's merely an aging man grappling with the sinister changes that have undermined the once-decent order of things. Despite his waning powers, he strives to protect his children and serve his state as best he can. Murray renders Polonius with all the humor and poignance due a father in an age under libertine sway. Now, that's contemporary.

Hardly as spectacular as *M:I 2* or as ambitious as *Hamlet*, Woody Allen's *Small Time Crooks* is more satisfying than both. Maybe that's because Allen has returned to basics. He's gone back to Virgil Starkwell, the *schlemiel* who failed miserably at his vocation: robbing banks. As you may remember, in *Take the Money and Run* (1969), Virgil's first bank stickup goes bust when the threatening note he hands the teller turns out to be illegible.

In *Small Time Crooks*, Starkwell bears a new name, Ray Winkler. He is 30 years older, but he shines no brighter. He is still the inveterate dreamer, his heart filled in equal amounts with larceny and love. When he notices that a pizza shop two doors from a neighborhood bank has gone out of business, he's instantly back in business. While his wife, Frenchie (Tracey Ullman), runs the store as a cookie shop, Ray and his buddies will drill open the basement wall and tunnel their way to wealth. As he explains to Frenchie, it's time they left their dumpy Manhattan apartment and moved to Miami to live the good life. ("I want to go to the dog track every day.") Winkler's aspirations are abysmally pedestrian. What happens to him and Frenchie, however, is anything but.

As in his best films, Allen deals in the conventions and clichés of popular culture, reworking them into wonderfully comic surprises. Here, he pays homage to Jackie Gleason's *Honeymooners*. He is a skinny, scheming, frantic Ralph Kramden in love with a woman he foolishly underestimates. As Frenchie, Ullman is always a light-year or two ahead of her Ray, never failing to anticipate his every lame gambit. Yet this is precisely why she loves him. Allen plays this material as would a consummate pool player. You see his shots coming, but he puts so much English on them that their impact never fails to be delightfully eccentric. The only thing small-time about this movie is in its title. Otherwise, it's a winningly unpretentious work that fully delivers the goods. c

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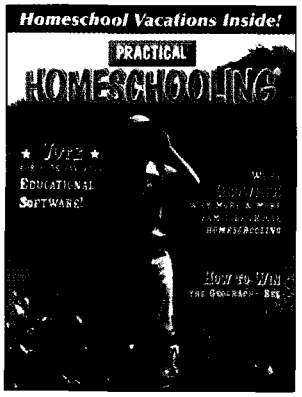

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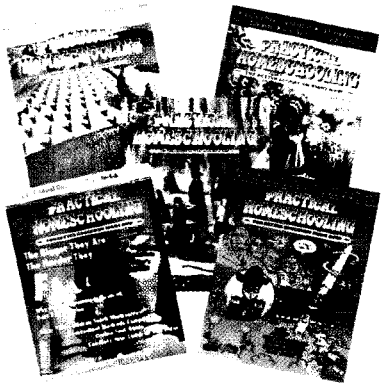
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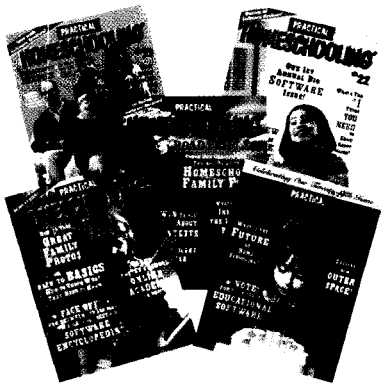
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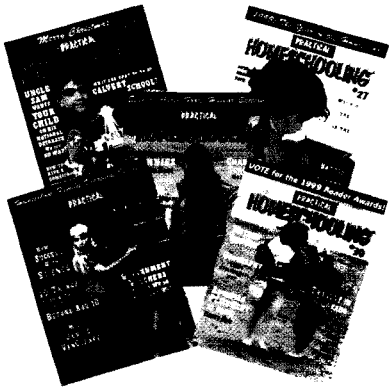
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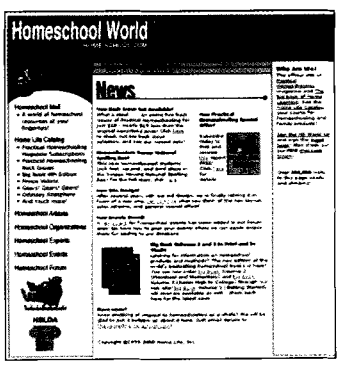

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